

Something new, something used, something borrowed:

Innovation of migrant entrepreneurs
in the service sector

Juan Francisco Alvarado Valenzuela

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**Something new,
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CHAPTER 1

General introduction

Levi Strauss, the inventor of the quintessential American garment, was born in Buttenheim, Bavaria on February 26, 1829 to Hirsch Strauss and his second wife, Rebecca Haas Strauss; Levi had three older brothers and three older sisters. Two years after his father succumbed to tuberculosis in 1846, Levi and his sisters emigrated to New York, where they were met by his two older brothers who owned a NYC-based wholesale dry goods business called “J. Strauss Brother & Co.” Levi soon began to learn the trade himself.

Extracted from Levi Strauss & Co Website

The example described above shows the connection of innovation and entrepreneurship with migration experiences. This description feeds the idea that outside actors could bring new ideas into the economic dynamics of cities and countries. In that line, new ideas in a particular field are broadly understood as innovation and they are seen as major drivers of economic development (European Commission, 2018b; Rogers, 2003; Śledzik, 2013). Consumers could be a source of new ideas when they look for better products adapted to their needs. For example, on Levi Strauss’ website, the creation of blue jeans is described as the outcome of a customer request. Producers as well are a source of new ideas, when they use their past experiences to improve a product. For example the case of the Pain Free Socket, created to satisfy the need of a relative of the entrepreneur, and turned into a product to satisfy the needs of other people using prosthetic devices (LaPorte, 2011). New ideas go hand in hand with entrepreneurship, and the way that entrepreneurs look at novel ideas in a given context is the core of this research. However, innovative ideas do not only belong to the sphere of economic development, but also contribute to the development of society in other spheres. For instance, in political spheres, activism and political movements are used as tools to share proposals to be heard at higher levels; innovation in those organisations influences the configurations of power in their demands as well as contact with other groups (Gnes, 2018). In cultural spheres, music, art or dance are being pushed forward with the eruption of artists and cultural agents onto the scene, who use their creativity and new ideas to show new expressions and meanings in their activities (Brandellero & Kloosterman, 2010). These other spheres are spaces where novel ideas change the outcomes that are being created, not necessarily with a direct economic impact. In other cases, ideas from other spheres of society are used as a source to develop economically viable ideas.

Innovative ideas are being proposed by actors in many spheres of our lives, which is why it is very important to understand the processes leading to the creation and implementation of those ideas. One image that is repeatedly used in the media is the figure of an innovator with only his or her personal qualities. Such a figure is usually depicted to have extraordinary vision, to be an extremely hard worker and to have innate curiosity (Bagley, 2014). Elon Musk (born South African, later Canadian and currently a US citizen) is one of those usual examples who media portray as an individual innovator-entrepreneur (Lafrance, 2018), with his vision for the future, his intelligence, his decisions as the initiator of electric automobiles and space transportation,

and his interest in solving the world's problems. Besides Musk's personal capacity, there are blurred aspects in his description: the conflictive and supportive family networks, the contact with angel investors, the collaborators to shape design ideas and the migration path he followed for studies and business purposes. A more accurate picture to portray an entrepreneur would be to add a description of the social context where their ideas came to be, and of the people who contributed to shape those ideas along the way.

A figure that is commonly attached to the innovator is the entrepreneur. Schumpeter (1947) defined an entrepreneur as a creator of something new when responding to changes in economic conditions. His work was mainly focused on the economic impact of actors, and it has been mostly used for the study of businesses and entrepreneurship. The consequences, however, spread to social and politic aspects, as Schumpeter already noticed when he wrote about institutions and social change (Schumpeter, 1943). The focus of this study is to build on the existing research about the economic role of actors, namely the entrepreneur who takes care of "doing new things or the doing of things that are already being done in a new way" (Schumpeter, 1947, p. 151). Such a definition suggests that one of the main characteristics of an entrepreneur is to be an innovator. The connection between entrepreneurship and innovation is a guide throughout the various chapters of this study.

Another definition borrowed from Aldrich (2005) and Thornton (1999), both in line with Schumpeter (1947), states that entrepreneurship is the act of individuals embedded in a specific social context, creating a new economic organisation. With that definition, the activity of introducing an innovation is an important part of being an entrepreneur. It can happen at any time over the course of a business venture, and it can be expressed in the product but also in other aspects inside the organisation or in the strategies to face the market.

To be clear, such an entrepreneur is to be distinguished from someone who manages a business. A manager is described as being busy with running the business and its administrative work (Hurt & Jones, 2005). The differentiation between entrepreneurs and managers is pertinent since the first group refers to those creating a new business and possibly innovating at a certain point, while the second group refers to those running a business and dealing with administrative work (Baumol, 2010). Managerial functions deal with areas such as enlargement of a firm, solving daily problems and ensuring business profitability. A manager's role is to administer a business that has been created, while the role of entrepreneur is to come up with new ideas and put them into practice. However, in smaller businesses the function of entrepreneur and manager are intertwined due to the lack of personnel to cover distinct tasks, which is why one person could cover both functions in a small or medium-sized company. To solve this, this study considers entrepreneurs as those who have founded or started a business of their own and who are the sole or main initiator of the business idea.

Back to the introductory quote, there is a particular situation that is central for this study: the entrepreneur being a migrant. Migration involves the movement of people from the place they were born and/or raised to other destinations. Such movement of people also promotes the movement of ideas and possibly the transformation into novel ideas (Schiller, Basch, & Blanc, 1995; Solano, 2015). In the selection of a business idea, migrant entrepreneurs implement

them in a society where they were not born. It is expected that this business would have some different characteristics in comparison to those businesses implemented by locals (Vacca, Solano, Lubbers, Molina, & McCarty, 2018). Evidence showing those differences, but also the similarities, can be found in examples like the organisation of the labour force of low-skilled workers in a household (Colombo, 2007), in the occupation of ethnic niches (Rath, 2002) or in the use of transnational links to receive goods to satisfy local ethnic groups (Ambrosini, 2014). The transmission of business ideas among migrants and local actors as well as the generation of novel business ideas remains a puzzle because of the difficulty in identifying and tracing innovation. In order to get a better understanding of the relationship between migration and innovation, this study proposes to take a deeper look at the businesses of migrants from various sides: the entrepreneurs, the product, the context and the business connections

In this introductory section, I explain the main ideas upon which this study is based, making an overview of the existing literature that covers the topics of innovation and entrepreneurship, innovation and migration, and innovation and migrant entrepreneurs. After that, I begin to delineate the theoretical building blocks used for this study where I propose to take into account the product that businesses are offering, the context in which entrepreneurs are acting, and the person supporting them. I finish this introductory chapter with the guiding research questions and an overview of the entire study.

1.1 | INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Innovation is a term that has been associated with entrepreneurship for a long time. Such interdependence can be observed in the way that the economic structure keeps changing (Schumpeter, 1989) as new products give an advantage for entrepreneurs to stand out in relation to the competition. Here, *products* refers to either goods or services. Such a process has been called *creative destruction*. Creative destruction refers to the role of an entrepreneur to destroy old products and systems of organisational and commercial practices in order to introduce something new, more efficient and with improvements (Śledzik, 2013). For example, the invention of Levi Jeans gave a competitive advantage to the owners to sell those products to clients who demanded stronger and more durable garments. The traditional garments used before were gradually displaced in favour of novel jeans at that time.

In the past decades, there has been a continuous improvement of technology in many industries. The use and production of technology has become one of the materialization of innovation in a good or a service (Smith, 2006). The original focus of innovation from the perspective of the individual entrepreneur has shifted to the study of novel products and services in complex economic organisations (Baumol, 2002; Bruland & Mowery, 2006; Śledzik, 2013). Technological companies, such as those in Silicon Valley, were approached to study the geographic concentration of innovation and the spillover effect to share innovation to connected companies in the world (Saxenian, 2007). The situation of large corporation, small

companies and the network of relations between them is different, each of them face changes in technology at their own pace.

Going back to the concept of creative destruction, innovation can be incremental or disruptive within a market (Ramella, 2015b; Smith, 2006). The break of an established economic state caused by an innovation takes place within the boundaries of a location: such processes of making novel products available for consumers of different contexts depends on the geographical place and society where it happens (Rogers, 2003). Based on these ideas about innovation, it seems like the choice of locality A or locality B could have a great impact on the use of necessary resources, the availability of business support and the openness in the market. Economic agents taking into account those conditions can profit at different periods of time from both influences inside those localities and external influences. The advantage of being such a pioneer in comparison to other economic agents, usually the competition, is framed in relation to the context. For example, having a monopoly for a few hundred customers in a small town is not the same as having a monopoly for a market with millions of consumers in a big city. Innovating is related to different aspects of the business, because novelties can be present in the product, marketing strategies, organisational structure or production methods (Ramella, 2015a). The product, being a good or a service, is the first idea that comes in mind, as well as most of the examples given in this chapter. The marketing strategies are linked with the capacity to advertise the business and create an impact in the mind of consumers. The organisational structure refers to the way that a company is being managed and workers are being assigned to positions. Finally the production methods include the use of raw materials, technology, machinery and also workers skills.

As the main individual actor, the innovator is crucial because their personal characteristics contribute to the formation of a novel idea. That is why the role of the personality and the type of education has been a recurrent topic among the description of such actors (Hovhannisyan & Keller, 2014). It is expected that the work experience in a given sector would provide the necessary skills to identify points where innovations are needed (Bosetti, Cattaneo, & Verdolini, 2015; Hunt, 2011). Many experienced entrepreneurs could identify the products that their innovation is replacing as well as product parts that are being improved. But nascent entrepreneurs have greater curiosity and take more risks with the ideas they think could work (Baumol, 2010). For example, the jeans that Levi patented were created by experienced tailors who joined forces with an experienced businessman in that same sector; or the influence of Musk disrupting different sectors who is joined by experienced engineers to materialize his risky ideas.

Individual approaches to explain innovation among entrepreneurs may seem incomplete as they leave aside the different role of people surrounding the entrepreneurs. Personal contacts contribute directly or indirectly to the implementation of an idea with the support of funds, experience and by connecting even more people when needed for a particular expertise (Malerba, 2006). The number of contacts varies according to the amount of effort and time it takes to maintain those relationships, and it was demonstrated that an average maximum of 150 people is what most can handle (Tamarit, Cuesta, Dunbar, & Sánchez, 2018). Among those

contacts, it is not clear the percentage or number of contacts used for business purposes, and even less is known about which contacts are used for the development or implementation of innovative business ideas.

Moving further to the situation of the local market, an entrepreneur is one among many other economic actors trading and attracting customers. Such a situation provides two ideal scenarios where an innovation finds a niche in that local market (Autio, Kenney, Mustar, Siegel, & Wright, 2014): one, a local market responds to the introduction of an innovation by adopting or rejecting a product; or two, a local market contributes to create the conditions to attract new products. Individual entrepreneurs relate to the context twice over: they identify the opportunities created for their ideas to be put into practice, and also they create their own opportunities for their businesses. The attractiveness of a good or service is thus bounded to the characteristics of the product itself and at the same time by the characteristics of the market where it is introduced. Such an idea is present in the work of Rogers and his model of diffusion of innovations where the context, and market as part of it, is one of the pillars of his model. Rogers (2003) proposes that an innovation needs to be defined first to understand its novel characteristics. Knowing the attributes of the products, he looks at the process of diffusion in a given social group being done by different types of actors involved over time. He also suggests looking at the conditions for the adoption of an innovation by a local population based on the characteristics of the novelty and the actors involved. An aspect that is missing is the particular role of entrepreneurs in the diffusion, so this research builds upon this model to look at that particular group of economic actors and their economic processes of starting a business venture.

The process of replacing an old product with a new one introduced by an entrepreneur has some consequences for the market. The formation of monopolies to avoid competition is one of the most common. A producer or seller of an innovation might prefer to keep competitors away by lowering the price of the innovation or by registering a patent (Jong & Marsili, 2010). There are costs and efforts associated with the registration of patents and that is why large capital and big companies usually opt for this strategy, while small businesses are restricted by the uncertainty of the viability of the novel product or by the barriers that restrict them registering their ideas. Keeping the production of a novel product for the owner of a patent has indeed positive consequences for that entrepreneur and their company, but at the same time creates some barriers for other entrepreneurs to compete and to launch a similar or improved product. In that process of profiting from the innovation and competing with other entrepreneurs, time plays an important role. Temporality matters when new products are being introduced, because the speed of adoption of an innovation depends on many factors (Rogers, 2003). Some of those factors are a positive or negative reception in the market, which implies a fast acceptance to a large number of consumers, or a low change scaling from particular groups to others, respectively. The longitudinal development of an innovation provides a better understanding of the transmission of the business idea, and highlights the important role of social groups in the process of accepting novel products (Bruland & Mowery, 2006). For example, innovations that are qualified in negative terms or that are not compatible with the consumers of a certain market may be rapidly discontinued, but such a process could take a different path with consumers in

another type of local market. At the same time, to introduce an innovation and discontinuing, over time, another product that has a sentimental value and is cherished by consumers in a local market leaves a mark on the consumption of that novel product.

In sum, there are three main aspects that connect innovation with entrepreneurship: the role of markets, the importance of business connections, and the effects over time. For the role of the markets, the boundaries are given by the distribution of a product, whether at a city, regional, national or international levels. The business connections of innovative entrepreneurs are intertwined with the personal connections, emphasizing the social aspect of making business. The effects over time go hand in hand with changes in the society, their preferences and the situation of markets. At the same time, there are aspects that have been shown not to link innovation with entrepreneurship. Innovating is not a constant state that happens with every action performed by entrepreneurs. Nor is innovation always related to entrepreneurship, since complex and big organisations may produce innovative ideas that are not becoming products available for consumer because other established alternatives are already in use.

1.2 | HOW HAS INNOVATION BEEN ADDRESSED IN MIGRATION STUDIES?

In recent years, some attention has been given to the topic of innovation and migrant entrepreneurs in the field of migration studies (Bosetti et al., 2015; Jensen, 2014; Kloosterman & Rath, 2001; Ozgen, Nijkamp, & Poot, 2011; Zhang & Zhang, 2016). Aliaga-Isla & Rialp (2013) contributed with their review about the state of the art of migrant entrepreneurship, and they highlighted the predominance of a focus on individual characteristics of migrants and the need to complement meso and macro levels in the theoretical frameworks. To do so, interactive models¹ are helpful when used to empirically test the realities of different contexts. Three main contributions follow from the existing literature.

One contribution comes from the context of the USA, which focuses on the ethnic origin of migrant entrepreneurs and their socio-demographic characteristics in comparison to other ethnic groups and to native-born populations (Light & Gold, 2000; Portes, 1995). Its importance is to look at the processes of growth and adaptation of migrant businesses to their environments. In the past, the introduction of innovations in the receiving society was not studied because of the assumption that ethnic entrepreneurs only have opportunities to replicate business activities within ethnic markets (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993). In that context, a framework was proposed to look at the opportunity structure, the ethnic group characteristics and their strategies (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990). The characteristics are given by their work experience, social connections, composition of the founding team and financial resources; the opportunity structure by the availability of a market for ethnic products; and the strategies by the possibility to find employment instead of entrepreneurship (Aldrich, 2005; Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990).

¹ For a better discussion about the two main interactive models in migrant entrepreneurship, see Rath, Schutjens and Solano (2019) and Dheer (2018) where they discuss the current state of migrant entrepreneurship literature.

These contributions explained above have provided a great deal towards the understanding of several aspects: the way that entrepreneurs recruit their workforce, the strategies to create a niche among people of the same ethnic origin co-ethnics, and the acceptance by a certain segment of the market. The features of migrant entrepreneurs are given by their previous work experience, their social networks, the composition of the founding team and financial resources (Aldrich, 2005).

In the research from cases in Europe, the specificities of each country show divergent scenarios for migrant entrepreneurs. In a comparative perspective, innovation is connected to the concentration of diverse migrants in European regions (Ozgen et al., 2011). Transnational engagement has acquired great importance as a connection between different social contexts and is now seen as a major supplier of needed resources for entrepreneurship (Ambrosini, 2012; Rath, Solano, & Schutjens, 2019 forthcoming). One of the main explanations for finding business opportunities is to look at the resources of migrant ethnic communities supporting the entrepreneurial initiatives of co-ethnics by providing a work force, funding and an ethnic market (Molina, Valenzuela-García, García-Macías, Lubbers, & Pampalona, 2015). At a different level, there are the opportunities of the mainstream market where niches are abandoned by other (native) entrepreneurs or niches are created with cheaper or better provision of products and services than the competition (Kloosterman, van der Leun, & Rath, 1999; Rath, 2005; Storti, 2014). Such views are expressed in the proposition of the mixed-embeddedness approach, which looks at migrant entrepreneurs in reference to the overall social structure where they operate (Kloosterman, 2010). This approach goes beyond the study of ethnic circles and ethnic markets, and instead looks at existing local structures such as the market opportunity structure, or existing legislation. In all these studies, innovation is not addressed as the main topic but is recommended as an avenue of research.

The literature focused on cases from other regions of the world states that innovation depends on the geographical concentration of ethnic groups and on the high level of education of certain individuals in comparison to other co-ethnics. Individual cases of migrant innovators were found in refugee camps in Africa, where the businesses flourish as a response to refugees' need and the action of individuals with good connections, better education and an initial monopoly in the provision of their service (Betts, Bloom, & Weaver, 2015). In the same line, diaspora entrepreneurs act as bridges for new business ideas between the countries of migration, and those ideas produce changes in the social context where they are introduced (Rana & Elo, 2017; Riddle & Brinkerhoff, 2011).

Transnationalism in migration studies has contributed by looking at the individual characteristics of entrepreneurs in relation to the sending and receiving societies and their social networks (Solano, 2015). Portes, Guarnizo, & Landolt (1999) apply the term transnationalism to the activities where contacts and resources are mobilized across borders in search of suppliers, capital and markets. Those contacts repeat over time, are constant, cross borders and involve a geographical distribution of their relatives, friends, and acquaintances (Dheer, 2018; Herz, 2015; Salaff, Greve, Siu-Lun, & Ping, 2003; Schiller et al., 1995). A mix of human capital and cultural capital has been identified as crucial for entrepreneurship in transnational contexts, especially

when looking at the differences between first generation migrants and their children (Rusinovic, 2008). Focusing on migrant entrepreneurs, Solano (2016b) argues that the specialization of migrant businesses as well as the production of creative ideas is related to the transnational economic practices for the case of Moroccan migrants in Milan and Amsterdam. Transnational connections contribute by bringing products or services not found by other migrants in the receiving society, thus bringing some novelty into the receiving market.

In addition, research has looked at social networks when examining migrant entrepreneurship and novel ideas. Contacts are entangled with entrepreneurs and other actors to produce relationships of friendship, collegiality, familial networks and more (Burt, 2000). Some relationships are based on status, reputation and affective emotions, and being embedded in such relations shapes the economic behaviour of entrepreneurs (Granovetter, 2005; Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993). It has been stated that networks' diversity can be positive and innovative due to the possibility of exchanging new information through ties connecting to other people (Granovetter, 2005). By using networks where information, goods, services and payments can be exchanged in the market, the possibility that migrant entrepreneurs add something new is present. Personal connections are useful for three main reasons (Granovetter, 1985): one, they have low or no cost involved; two, they are reliable; and three, their information is rich and detailed. Of course, we have learned that a notion of homogeneity within the group prevails in social groups, including opinion, information, resources and more (Burt, 2004). Thus, novel ideas are meant to be spotted in places of people who connect between different homogenous groups. Such a situation is described by the term structural holes, which is a structure where bridges open up the possibility to exchange information, produce novel ideas and reflect some qualities of the actors involved in the transactions (Podolny, 2001). In sum, since we know that entrepreneurs rely to a large extent on personal contacts, including business partners and employees, one important way to find out about innovative ideas is to identify the kind of network in which they are embedded (Carruthers & Babb, 2013).

Besides the embeddedness of entrepreneurs with their surrounding contacts, the embeddedness to the social context is also mentioned as important to exchange resources and information (Kloosterman et al., 1999). The opportunity structure for migrant entrepreneurs has been described as depending on the availability of a market for ethnic products and the possibility of finding a cheap and adequate labour force (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990), turning the economic domain of entrepreneurship and innovation into a social domain based on ethnic and non-ethnic relationships.

Going further in the connection of the individual level with the contextual level, the role of migrant ethnic communities has been documented as critical to support the entrepreneurial initiatives of co-ethnics by providing a workforce, funding and an ethnic market (Logan et al., 2002; Molina et al., 2015; Saxenian, 2002). There has been research done on the rise of migrant entrepreneurship by paying attention to the role of the opportunity structure of the social context (Kloosterman, 2010; Kloosterman et al., 1999; Rath, 2002; Rath & Kloosterman, 2000). In that context, the social influence of other migrants and native-born people pushes some migrants to start their own businesses (Light & Gold, 2000; Molina et al., 2015; Portes

& Sensenbrenner, 1993; Portes & Vickstrom, 2011). And finally, when adopting business ideas, transnational communities are sources of resources and products to satisfy ethnic demands of a migrant population in different countries (Ambrosini, 2012; Portes et al., 1999). In these contributions, the topic of innovation does not come to the frontline, leaving an open path for further research. The approach of mixed embeddedness (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001; Kloosterman et al., 1999) proposes to look at migrant entrepreneurs in reference to the overall social, political and economic structure in which they operate. By going beyond the study of ethnic circles and ethnic markets, and instead looking at the existing local structures such as the market opportunity structure or the existing legislation, the study of novel products across socio-ethnic relations becomes relevant.

In this study, the exploration of innovation among migrant entrepreneurs takes individual characteristics as the pivotal point where the descriptions and analysis of the products offered are attached; the context and the people surrounding those entrepreneurs provides the whole picture to answer the research questions explained in the coming chapter.

1.3 | INNOVATION AND MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The literature on migrant entrepreneurship has continuously characterized migrant businesses as being mostly micro, small- and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) (Morgan, Sui, & Baum, 2018). Such businesses are also often called irregular or informal as they are not always regulated by the norms of the countries in which they operate (Reyneri, 1998). As said before, small businesses have limitations in their capacity to register new products and also their capacity to have a team of research and development of novel ideas. This is why measuring innovation is challenging to this particular group (Smith, 2006) and previous research in migration studies has not given a lot of attention to the topic of innovation and migrant entrepreneurs.

Some authors have mentioned innovation as part of the suggested avenues of research (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001), while others have found evidence about the lack of innovation as an strategy to survive in the garment sector (Rath, 2002). As part of European comparative research, innovation has been statistically matched in geographical regions where there is a concentration of migrants with diverse origins (Ozgen et al., 2011). A further explanation at local levels has been missing to be able to explain this correlation, and also whether diverse origins are a fuel for innovation development. Another project collected data from the humanitarian response to refugees' needs in African camps (Betts et al., 2015) and found that refugees with a greater status, education and resources used their resources to introduce novel business ideas, so satisfying the needs of other refugees and profiting from their monopolist position.

The use of the term innovation gained some attention inside migration studies with the study of the mobility of high-skilled workers and elites (Aliaga-Isla & Rialp, 2013; Hunt, 2011; Ozgen et al., 2011; Saxenian, 2007). This followed innovation in the spheres of high-tech, patents or scientific articles. The actors behind those innovations were workers described as migrants with high education levels and technological skills. Despite its current importance, the efforts and

restrictions needed for a formal registration of a patent leaves out small and medium businesses. Innovation developed and implemented by highly skilled migrant workers has contributed to attention being paid to human mobility as part of the development of novel ideas. By looking at the creation and implementation of something new in the receiving society where migrants work, it is possible to understand the elements that are needed for innovating.

Human capital, as seen from the levels of education and work experience, is one of the main individual characteristics and the primary explanation for innovative business ideas and their implementation when shifting from contextual characteristics to individual ones (Bosetti et al., 2015; Hunt, 2011; Scott, 2006). But, research shows a mismatch of human capital among the sending and receiving countries, where the skills brought or acquired by migrants do not lead to work trajectories to the same levels as they do for native-born people (Kloosterman, Rusinovic, & Yeboah, 2016). There are some cases where work experience and social contacts allow entrepreneurs to profit from the identification of key processes improving a product, a process or an organisation (Morgan et al., 2018). So, higher human capital seems to be the key for innovation but still depends on the other conditions such as market, connections or resources.

1.4 | RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study builds upon the existing research done in the crossroad of the fields of migration, innovation and migration. To do so, guiding questions are needed to examine the novel business ideas of migrant entrepreneurs. Based on the idea that migrant entrepreneurs could act as agents who translate ideas across geographical locations, this study explores the factors surrounding the translation of those ideas into business initiatives. The primordial role of entrepreneurs is contrasted with the position of migrants in relation to a wider social context where other factors are present.

I posit that the main determinants of novelty for a business idea are found at the crossing points of i) the individual characteristics of migrant entrepreneurs with: ii) the features of the product that is being offered for commercialisation; iii) the relation with the social context where the venture is operating, with openings and closures for innovation within the opportunity structure; and iv) a suitable network of business connections that are being contacted at different stages.

With those four factors in mind, the following research questions guide the rest of this study:

- i) How do the individual characteristics of an entrepreneur play a role in the development of an idea into a business? The starting point of this study is to look at the process of adapting novel ideas from the lenses and capacities of the entrepreneurs themselves.
- ii) What are the features of the products and the production processes that migrant entrepreneurs develop for their business? This question aims to look at certain aspects of the products being offered in the market and their production: from those that show high levels of novelty to those showing mere replication.

- iii) What is the institutional and social context providing a local opportunity structure to promote or inhibit innovation among migrant entrepreneurs? With this question, the external conditions are taken into account as important factors that entrepreneurs need to live through.
- iv) What is the role of diverse/homogeneous business connections of migrant entrepreneurs in the development and implementation of innovative/replicative business ideas? With this last question, the influence of the closest social contacts to the entrepreneur is acknowledged.

To be able to answer these questions, it is important to look at the elements of their business that are new, those that have been used before, and those that are recommended by other people around them. The starting point is the agency of migrant entrepreneurs. That agency is able to produce a product. The process is supported by the close circle of people around an entrepreneur. And all those factors coincide in a certain context where external social, economic and political factors create business opportunities.

To be able to describe individual characteristics, this study takes the following sub-questions where the migratory situation is underlying each of them:

- Is education and work experience in different contexts among migrant entrepreneurs contributing to incorporate (novel) business ideas in the products they provide?
- What types of resources are used in the country of origin and destination by migrant entrepreneurs to develop (novel) business ideas?
- Who are the social groups in different geographical location influencing novel ideas in the businesses of migrant entrepreneurs business purposes in different geographical location?
- What cultural elements do migrant entrepreneurs take from their country of origin to be part of their (novel) business idea in the country of destination?

1.5 | SELECTION OF THE EMPIRICAL CASES AND OVERVIEW OF THE MANUSCRIPT

This general introduction is the first section where the general considerations unwrap the link between the topic of innovation and the topic of migrant entrepreneurship. I introduce the theoretical definitions that are used in the chapters in relation to innovation and entrepreneurship. There is also a concise contribution around migrant entrepreneurs having a potential role as innovative business actors. There is a glimpse of the main theoretical approaches that constitute the foundation of the building blocks connecting entrepreneurship and innovation in the case of migrants.

With the main four research questions in mind, empirical cases are required to further explore the novelty of business ideas from the perspective of migrant entrepreneurs. Previous research pointed at urban spaces as hubs where innovative ideas appear and migrants are present in large and diverse numbers (Florida, Adler, & Mellander, 2016; Marchand & Siegel, 2014). In the same line, urban economies go through innovative changes in their structure and in the

provision of products for the market that is continuously growing and changing (Herstad, 2017). Such cities have been the background where the studies of migration scholars have focused on ethnic or immigrant communities in neighbourhoods (Logan et al., 2002), or on policies from urban administrations (not) promoting ethnic neighbourhoods as a strategy to boost tourism and to create a sort of international cosmopolitan identity (Rath, Bodaar, Wagemakers, & Wu, 2017). This study looks at urban spaces as well as the background where novel business ideas are explored. For the remaining chapters, the term *local context* refers to those urban spaces where the research is taking place.

Another important situation when looking for empirical cases is related to the selection of the migrant entrepreneurs who would be part of this research. A usual choice is to look for a particular group of entrepreneurs who share the same nationality (Dheer, 2018). Such a study tries to find common characteristics among those entrepreneurs, such as the reason for migration, their system of education or the languages being spoken. However, when looking for novel business ideas, the choice of an economic sector provides a similar system to control for external factors. Economic sectors provide a better comparison across individual cases because entrepreneurs who want to introduce novel products face similar external pressure, a similar market and a competition against each other in the same geographical location (Asheim & Gertler, 2006; Malerba, 2006). An economic sector that has been getting attention in the past years due to its rapid changes and the possibility to introduce new products – goods and services – is the service sector (Miles, 2009; OECD, 2005). The particularity of the service sector is the combination of tangible and intangible products, for example a mobile phone with apps. For the rest of this study, the term product refers to the combination of tangible and intangible services being provided by entrepreneurs.

The search for suitable cases where the empirical information could be collected was done based on the existence of two factors: being an urban space and having a growing service sector. Besides, given that the actors of this study are migrant entrepreneurs, the presence of migrant groups in an urban space was also taken into account. On the one side, having the aim of providing new evidence of the way that migrant entrepreneurs introduce novel business ideas, the locations where previous research presented the opportunity for comparisons and contrasts was taken into account. On the other side, new cities that have not been largely explored were also suitable locations to start understanding the phenomena without strong prior clues of what was going to be found. In both scenarios, the empirical cases had to focus on the exploration of novel ideas among migrant entrepreneurs. To strike a balance, two contrasting cases were selected: one urban location with a large amount of research done on the topic, and another urban location where research was still being developed. Brescia in Italy and Amsterdam in the Netherlands allowed me to highlight two extreme cases, while each providing the possibility to look at situations where products are being offered by migrants, contextual conditions are being faced and business networking are being built. A further explanation of the reasons why each case was chosen is provided below, including the main interest to answer a different subset from the research questions at each of the locations.

The case of Amsterdam offered a unique opportunity to look at the services provided by migrant entrepreneurs in an urban space with a well-documented migration history. The diversity in the origin of migrants is very large; for example there is a public-funded project called 180amsterdammers that show the stories of each of the nationalities living in this city. On the topic of migrant entrepreneurs, the study of particular ethnic groups showed their connections abroad and their business capacities (Solano, 2016a). On the topic of services, the city offers facilities for the establishment of companies, and for the promotion of technological services for particular consumers and for companies (Hawes et al., 2017). For Amsterdam, the research questions that are of interest are on the agency of the entrepreneurs, the features of the (innovative) services and the influence of business connections.

To study the service businesses in the urban centre of Brescia, the first step was to look at the share of migrants compared to the total population. This percentage is one of the highest among Italian provincial capitals (Lucarno, 2010), historically caused by industrial development and business opportunities in the region that attracted much domestic and international migration. The growing conditions and attention to innovation in the city, as attested by the rising number of innovative companies in the region according to ISTAT, make the case of service businesses particularly interesting. The website of the city of Brescia states that infrastructure has been built in recent years to digitize certain aspects of the political administration, the daily life of citizens and the provision of social services. At the same time, the presence of migrant entrepreneurs in this medium-sized city provided a unique opportunity to explore this urban space, as the main –and to my knowledge the only– source of information is just a yearly publication in Italian (Lucarno, 2010). The topics that are of interest to research about this case pertain to the role of the contextual conditions, the agency of the migrant entrepreneurs and their business connections.

As can be seen from the previous two paragraphs about the cities, this study brings information from two contrasting urban locations. By doing that, the empirical material can be used to cover various aspects of the theory behind innovation such as the *product & entrepreneurs* in Amsterdam and *context & entrepreneurs* in Brescia, while at the same time there is an overlap with the topic of *connections & entrepreneurs*. It is important to notice that the first research question concerning the individual characteristics of migrant entrepreneurs is used in all the empirical chapters. With this information in mind, the organisation of the rest of the chapters is described below.

In **Chapter 2**, the theoretical building blocks connect the individual characteristics of the entrepreneurs with the rest of the aspects referring to the analysis of the product, the context and the connections. Such a combination of theoretical elements allow us to understand the complexity in the processes of innovation for the cases of migrant entrepreneurs, and at the same time provides a simple sub-set of theoretical relations. The existing theoretical concepts are operationalized to be able to look at the adaptation of business ideas from a variety of angles, allowing the possibility to draw on the complementary empirical cases chosen. The assemblage of theoretical elements is integrated as an interactive body of concepts applied for the analysis of different locations.

In **Chapter 3**, I describe in detail all the processes related to the collection of data for this research. The research sites are Brescia in Italy and Amsterdam in the Netherlands. I describe the methodological process followed: choosing respondents and gathering the necessary complementary information. I also provide the inspiration used to create the questions for the interview guides which were used in the two locations (the models for Italian and English can be found in Annex 11.2 and 11.3). Given the magnitude of collecting data in two different locations, a very structured protocol had to be created for each location to ensure the proper collection and storage of data – in a physical space and in a digital one. This section provides a useful guide for future researchers who aim to use similar methodologies for the collection of data among migrant entrepreneurs. The necessary explanations are provided in five steps: design of tools, selection of target population, collection of responses, creation of databases and interpretation of data, plus a critical reflection of the limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 begins with a description of the products being offered by the migrant entrepreneurs in Amsterdam. Amsterdam is presented as a cosmopolitan and creative city in the Netherlands with a reputation of hosting almost all nationalities, and with well-documented cases of migrant entrepreneurs operating in the city. The services being offered in the market are analysed in terms of their compatibility with a certain niche that is being targeted. Migrant entrepreneurs are given the opportunity to explain which elements of their service are novel for the Amsterdam market, and to reflect on the elements they have translated from their country of origin. The adaptation of the services is the core of this chapter; novelties and replications are found within the interviewed cases.

Chapter 5 focuses on the relation between context and entrepreneurs. The case of Brescia is presented here as a medium-sized provincial capital in northern Italy. This city has one of the highest percentage of migrants living in the area (IRS, 2017) as well as visible ethnic shops in the city centre. The importance of contextual conditions is expressed in the institutional arrangements, economic factors and socio-cultural expressions. Seen from the eyes of migrant entrepreneurs, the urban space offers opportunities and limitations. The presence of migrant groups is also taken into account as facilitators of resources and as promoters of social control among their members.

Chapter 6 is divided into two cases, explaining the role of the connections surrounding migrant entrepreneurs in two stages: creation, and implementation, of a business idea. In both cases, the analysis centres around the influence of those business connections in the ideas of the entrepreneur. Firstly, this is to identify who plays a role in the business circles of each migrant entrepreneur, and secondly it is to look at the actions or supporting functions these people fulfil in that process of adapting business ideas into services or goods. The first section corresponds to the case of Amsterdam where the ego-network of each entrepreneur was analysed using the topics of level of education, socio-economic position and nationality. The second section corresponds to the case of Brescia where the ego-network was looked at in terms of sex, level of education and age.

Finally, **Chapter 7** provides a general conclusion to this study. I propose that the empirical evidence collected in this research provides a complex picture of the process of adapting

business ideas into novel goods and services provided by migrant entrepreneurs. By looking at migrant entrepreneurs in general, vis-à-vis their capacity to introduce novelties in the market, we are able to identify them as an asset for the local economic structure. Nonetheless, the process of introducing novel ideas involves many failed attempts and great efforts to find a niche market of initial customers. At the end of this concluding chapter, I provide a self-reflection of the limitations of three main aspects of this study: using existing financial measures to qualify businesses, the replicability of the methodology, and the availability of longitudinal data that was collected during this research.

CHAPTER 2

Ideas, context and connections: conceptual framing of the opportunities for novel ideas from migrant entrepreneurs²

² This chapter partially reproduces an article published in *Sociologica*, in a special issue on the future of mixed embeddedness. ALVARADO, Juan Francisco (2018). Ideas, Context and Connections: Conceptual Framing of the Opportunity to Innovate for Migrant Entrepreneurs. *Sociologica*, v. 12, n. 2, p. 87-102.

2.1 | INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is a powerful driver of economic growth and job creation: it creates new companies and jobs, opens up new markets, and nurtures new skills and capabilities.
European Commission, 2018a

This quote found in the section on Migrant Entrepreneurs on the website of the European Commission exhibits the advantages of promoting entrepreneurship for the whole of society. Such policy discourse stresses the position of entrepreneurship linked to the creation of new companies, new markets and new opportunities (Jensen, 2014). The importance of searching for novelty directly points to the prominence of economic innovation, but it does not aim to search further in novel business ideas originating from the businesses of migrant entrepreneurs. Literature about this topic is scarce (Lang, 2018), thus the need to search for clues about novel business ideas in the existing research, looking at the positive and negative sides of migrant and ethnic entrepreneurship. On the one hand, high levels of education of migrants are seen as a requisite to induce new business ideas. Research on this topic includes the development of digital innovation in Silicon Valley supported by high human capital in combination with transnational ethnic ties (Saxenian, 2007); the outperformance of a certain group of migrants in the US in terms of innovation by self-selection and structural conditions (Hunt, 2011); and the contribution to local economies in the Netherlands by educated migrants who chose to be entrepreneurs (Kloosterman & Rath, 2014). On the other hand, low levels of education prevent migrants in Italy from entering the labour market (Ballarino & Panichella, 2015) and entrepreneurship becomes in many cases a survival strategy to be economically active (Aliaga-Isla & Rialp, 2013; Fullin, 2011). In this last case, the description of migrants' businesses portrays replicative business ideas that are dependent on the resources of the ethnic community where they are embedded (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990; Zhou & Portes, 1993). In this chapter, I use the description of the individual characteristic of migrants and go further by proposing a systematic assemblage of existing theoretical frameworks for the study of the opportunities for novel ideas through the entrepreneurial activities of migrant entrepreneurs.

To start with, this study uses Schumpeter's definition of considering *innovation* as the process of introducing a novelty (Schumpeter, 1947). In his work, Schumpeter argues that innovation is an inherent characteristic of entrepreneurs as they become the economic engine for the development and improvement of their societies. As part of that process, innovation is widely referred to as the novel change adopted in one or more of the following elements: a product, a method of production, a marketing strategy, or an organizational change (Ramella, 2015b). With this input, the first building block of this study uses previous studies where innovation or novel ideas are used to look at products that are being introduced by entrepreneurs.

Once a novel business product is seen from its inherent characteristics, the context where that novelty is introduced becomes the second building block. When I refer to the context, this should be understood as the social context in which the economic activity takes places (Granovetter,

2005). Such a context is exposed to changes over periods of time: the opportunities for a disruptive innovation or to adapt incrementally can be better observed by framing the social context ex-ante and ex-post (Bruland & Mowery, 2006; Rogers, 2004). Building in this frame of embeddedness, the approach of mixed embeddedness looks for opportunities in the social context where the agency of migrant entrepreneurs interacts with the rest of actors in society (Jones, Ram, Edwards, Kiselinchev, & Muchenje, 2014; Kloosterman, 2010). During a migratory experience, the social context can be seen through a dual lens, or sometimes multiple lenses when more migratory locations are involved. In such a context, the role of ethnic markets is important but not decisive; the multi-sited and longitudinal perspective as well as the mainstream markets offer better perspectives (Ram, Jones, & Villares-Varela, 2017).

The spread of innovative business ideas among different actors, either entrepreneurs or consumers, inside those social contexts is done through social connections, and here appears the third building block. It has been shown that social networks influence different stages of entrepreneurship, with similar results in various countries (Greve & Salaff, 2003). The importance of networks in the diffusion and adaptation of an innovation was present in the model of diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 2003). For the specific case of migrant entrepreneurs, studies show the use a mix of local and transnational networks to acquire advice, skills and resources (Solano, 2015; Vacca et al., 2018). Those findings could be applied to the study of novel business ideas, where networks are nowadays being measured and described in more detail than in previous studies (Bilecen, Gamper, & Lubbers, 2018).

A step forward in the study of innovation among migrant entrepreneurs appears from those complementary contributions that are further presented in this chapter. I conclude with the suggestion of using a migratory experience as one of the sources to find opportunities of where to frame, develop or limit innovation as part of a business idea. Temporal business trips has already been used to study local entrepreneurs who spend time abroad to learn from other cultures and other contexts (Hovhannisyan & Keller, 2014). This study builds upon existing knowledge to further explore the opportunities for innovative business ideas among migrant entrepreneurs.

2.2 | ECONOMIC INNOVATION

Innovation is seen as something new in the market with economic value (Ramella, 2015b; Rogers, 2015; Smith, 2006). Schumpeter (1939) referred to innovation as an inherent quality of entrepreneurs because they contribute to the economic improvement of a society by starting new businesses where customers are willing to pay for that novelty. A new product can be a tangible good, e.g. an electric scooter, or a service, e.g. the creation of a digital app. A new method of production can be the process of assembly lines when manufacturing new aircraft components. A new marketing strategy can be experienced every year in the campaign advertisements for the US Super Bowl. And, an organizational change can be seen in a company's new horizontal communication structures. The model of diffusion of innovation also considers

innovation as economic rewards that are gradually adopted by the general public (Rogers, 2004). For this study, however, innovation remains defined as the introduction of something new in order to transform a current economic state or situation.

Following this definition, innovation can be incremental or disruptive (Ramella, 2015b; Smith, 2006). For those changes to be described as innovation, some authors opt for the disruptive creation of technology as the key (Baumol, 2002; Hovhannisyan & Keller, 2014), with a totally revolutionary and out-of-the-box improvement that changes existing products, standards or solutions for something better (Schumpeter, 1947; Śledzik, 2013). A complementary option is to consider that business opportunities need to be discovered incrementally before the competition discovers them (Jong & Marsili, 2010). An example is the incremental adaptation of windmills in England and the Netherlands to the needs of production in various industries – wood sawing, food milling, paint production and more – followed by the disruptive development of the steam engine in the first industrial revolution in England that quickly replaced wind power (Bruland & Mowery, 2006). The geographical transfer of business ideas is vital for opportunities to diffuse and adapt those innovations in different markets. Thus, an approach to understand novelty implies a comparison between the situation of an economic sector at a certain time and in a certain location before and after the innovation, assessing the level of creation or discovery of technology.

The measurement of innovation has evolved along the lines of the types of innovation: i) new product, ii) new process, iii) new organisation, and iv) new marketing. The most common methods are to measure the number of registered patents (Hunt, 2011; Ramella, 2015b; Smith, 2006) or the number of scientific articles published (Baumol, 2002; Saxenian, 2007; Smith, 2006). Patents are historical records where the invention is described to a public authority, who in return gives commercial rights to use that invention in business for a limited time (Smith, 2006). Scientific articles are outcomes of research with the possibility of being turned into a business idea (Hunt, 2011). Patents and scientific articles provided a perspective on the development of innovation in past decades, but it might be useful to look at new methods to measure the complexity of economic innovations. The latest effort to have a standardized tool is the Oslo Manual (OECD / EuroStat, 2005) with the homogenization of measures across European countries included in the Community Innovation Survey – CIS.

These measures offer a wider perspective on novel ideas guiding ground-breaking changes in society. Behind those changes with high impact, there are also novelties being introduced in economic relations and other fields. From that, the theoretical lens proposed in this study is an effort to understand novel ideas as part of a complex process of knowledge accumulation, common learning and dissemination paths (Bruland & Mowery, 2006), leaving behind the view of a one-man enterprise as the only actor involved. Also, more attention is given to the study of all the informal procedures leading to an innovation (Bruland & Mowery, 2006), where registered patents do not play a vital role.

2.3 | THE THEORETICAL LENS OF THIS STUDY

For this study, certain *individual aspects* of migrant entrepreneurs are connected to three other aspects: i) the kind of *product* being offered in the market; ii) the social, political and economic *context*; and iii) the *collaboration* of business contacts. Each of those aspects borrows theoretical ideas from existing approaches, and they constitute the theoretical building blocks of this study. The individual aspects remain central because the entrepreneurs' business ideas are seen as an outcome of the combination of the human, social and financial sources of capital influencing that process (Aldrich, 2005; Granovetter, 2005; Powell & Grodal, 2006). Individual characteristics can be either opportunities or limitations for migrants who aim to be economically active in the receiving society. To enter certain businesses, an entrepreneur uses some signal marks such as educational credentials, work experience, migratory experience, gender, and family background. Education indeed remains one of the main conditions to develop novel ideas (Bosetti et al., 2015) but complemented by characteristics from previous work experience, family situations, available funding and social connections.

To match the actions of individual migrant entrepreneurs to the introduction of goods and services, the model of diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 2003) suggests that an innovation could be successfully introduced into a social group following existing norms, which are thus accepted easily by the population. When easing the process of compatibility, opinion leaders and mass media are used to inform and convince the whole group about the effects of that innovation. The cases used in Rogers' book to explain the introduction of an innovation into different groups involved a process of diffusion in certain social groups; but, in his latest edition, Rogers asserts that some of those cases need further analysis to find out the modifications being made to adapt an innovation to particular social contexts. The innovators, usually described as having a high status and high socio-economic characteristics, act as agents to inform about the consequences of trying such innovations and contribute to the diffusion process as a role model for the rest of the members of the social group.

When applying such a model to migrant entrepreneurs, there are some hints that could point to a particular profile of individual migrant entrepreneurs who would be able to make such an adaptation of new ideas and transform them into business initiatives. This includes whether the innovation is based on their characteristic of being a migrant in a social context that is favourable to starting a business, or whether it is based on their characteristic of having a high level of education or high status in their sending or receiving country.

The figure of a migrant entrepreneur as part of a social group connects the idea to the importance of the contextual factor. A group of authors (Kloosterman & Rath, 2014; Kloosterman et al., 1999) proposed the approach of mixed embeddedness to explain the rise of migrant entrepreneurs in the Dutch context. The main idea is to consider the resources of entrepreneurs in relation to urban economies, existing regulations and the local institutional framework in the receiving society. Therefore, they suggested that migrant entrepreneurship is better explained taking into account the interaction of these individuals with the larger opportunity structure: in other words, the interaction with their own ethnic community with the native society and with

other individual and institutional actors. Empirical research found a large number of migrant entrepreneurs in the lower end of the opportunity structure (Kloosterman, 2010). Businesses in those sectors were built from on low qualifications of migrants with low educational levels as well as small amounts of investment.

In a further exploration, Kloosterman & Rath (2001) explained the role of actors and markets as two main elements of the opportunity structure. Actors are analysed from their capacities and resources based on their different social, cultural, human and financial capital. Competition and openings in the local markets contribute to explain migrants' trajectories and distribution patterns. The same authors proposed that the opportunity structure is better studied from three levels: national, urban-regional, and neighbourhood. This allows a more detailed analysis at each level of the main actors as well as the market dynamics.

In a later contribution, Kloosterman (2010) again uses the framework where the human capital of entrepreneurs matches with the opportunity structure. The new distinctions in this model are the operationalization of the individual versus the context: migrant entrepreneurs with low or high skills, and market structures with stagnating or expanding economic activities. Using this model to analyse the opportunities for migrants to engage in different kinds of businesses allows more flexibility. For this study, migrant entrepreneurial activities repeatedly fall into the trap of small investments, limited educational requirement and ethnic social ties.

Follow-up research using the mixed-embeddedness model has suggested possible avenues for research, following the changes of migratory flows and economic conditions in the past twenty years. The study of novel ideas and innovative business of migrants has already been suggested (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001; Rath & Kloosterman, 2000). In most migrant businesses, the role of migrants was partially focused on introducing goods and services in the local economies where they operate, while another aspect was the increasing use of technology-based communications and machinery.

A key role is given to the networks of people supporting such initiatives, whether focusing on the relation with ethnic circles or with circles of native-born people, or both. The development, test and improvement of an innovation is affected by the supporting networks of each entrepreneur (Rogers, 2002). However, understanding the specific type of social networks which are activated by migrants in different processes of introducing a novel idea is the key: family members because of their trust, friends because of their similarity, or acquaintances because of their emotional distance and diversity. Individual actors who take such opportunities have a tendency to spend time in similar circles, frequent similar places and interact with similar others (Burt, 2000, p. 285). Overall, it is important to find out more about the significance of personal connections of migrant entrepreneurs overlapping with an exchange of resources and functions associated with business purposes.

A side topic of focusing on the social networks is that entrepreneurs usually gain upward mobility within their own social circles as part of their economic activity (Hurt & Jones, 2005). When using the same term of upward mobility but in relation to the mainstream society in the country of destination, the situation is no longer so clear, and a line of research would explain this with the concept of the segmented assimilation of migrants (Zhou & Portes, 1993). In that

line, migrants and their businesses are only located in a segment of the society, and it is usually the lower end of the socio-economic scale. One aspect that is marked in the interaction with the social group of the local society is the differentiation of migrant entrepreneurs from migrant workers, as the former are seen as job creators, and as those who give jobs to their own co-ethnics. In any case, people who engage in entrepreneurship forge new identities as business owners, which gives them a new occupational status among the migrant community (Aldrich, 2005; Aldrich & Martinez, 2001).

Going back to the model of diffusion of innovation, there are four main factors enabling the process of diffusion of innovations in a given context (Hall, 2006; Rogers, 2004): a) the *attributes of innovations*, providing a path for the process of adoption by actors; b) the *communication channels* used in the transmission of information and resources; c) the *social system* with the structure of the market, culture and policies; and d) the *time* needed to test and observe the effects of such innovation. Below, there is an explanation of the main elements of this model when introducing an innovation into socio-economic contexts. After this explanation, the following sub-chapters show the application of it with the case of migrant entrepreneurs.

a) Attributes of innovation

Attributes of an innovation refer to the characteristics of a product or practice at the beginning of the diffusion process. The decision to innovate is made by actors, who perceive that such a new situation provides a better alternative (Hall, 2006). There are some actors playing the role of innovators and promoting the potential improvement of a particular situation, but also consumers who, in the process of demanding a product, influence the need for improvement and adaptation of an innovation (Hall, 2006). The decision to adopt an innovation is given by the combination of the following five attributes (Rogers, 2003). The first factor is the relative advantage compared to the product that the innovation is trying to replace or improve. The second factor is the compatibility of the innovation with existing traditions in the society. The third is complexity: the difficulty in understanding how to use an innovation. The fourth factor is the trialability; in other words, the actual possibility that a person uses the innovation. Finally, the fifth factor is the observability of the results from other actors of the group.

b) Channels of Communication

Divergent paths of transmission have been traced in the adoption of innovative ideas in different places or different social groups. Two ideal paths are present in this model (Rogers, 2003), which spread an innovation from the sources of innovation to late adopters. There is the path of personal influence over other actors, which is effective to change the attitude towards an innovation; and there is the path of mass media channels, creating awareness of the existence of such a novelty.

In both ideal typical paths, the role of similarity between actors is crucial for the spread of the message. A situation of similarity, known as homophily, leaves very few opportunities for the transmission of a novelty between individuals (Burt, 2004). There are very few novelties in the relationship of similar actors. Meanwhile a situation of dissimilarity, known as heterophily,

triggers the exchange of new information and innovation (Granovetter, 2005). The dissimilar characteristics allowing innovation are usually connected to differences in information and experience, referring to individuals with different levels of education, past work experience or social status (Rogers, 2003).

The increase in paths of transmission is not equivalent to a rapid diffusion but depends on the structure within and across social groups or geographical locations. Between social groups, key contacts are bridges who provide diverse information and opportunities to distinct social groups (Burt, 2000). Bridges have different purposes (Burt, 2004): to create awareness and interest among groups; to transfer best practices; and to join unrelated groups. In a geographical location, key contacts are cosmopolites rather than localities (Rogers, 2003) because of their ability to understand social systems in different localities.

c) Social System

The social system is presented in this model as a structure where actors relate to each other. There are formal roles and hierarchy for each actor. This way, the system provides some conditions for human behaviour, and at the same time influence among actors (Rogers, 2003). The relationships within insiders are kept with norms followed by most of the actors; some of those norms are compatible with the introduction of new ideas, while others are obstacles. Opinion leaders are actors with the ability to influence the behaviour of groups inside the social system; usually, they have more contacts with outsiders and hold a higher status. Inside a social system, innovation is introduced by one or a combination of the following: having individuals acting as decision-makers; giving the community the role as a collective consensus; and using authority to force individuals to comply.

A final note on the social system is related to the existence of norms and regulations in a social system. Disruptive innovations take advantage of the absence of regulations to profit from the introduction of that innovation (Hall, 2006). For example, taxi transportation companies based on digital platforms, who do not employ taxi drivers, are subject to different labour market regulations than traditional taxi companies. Incremental innovations usually build upon existing regulations of a product (Hall, 2006). One example is the continuous improvements of apps for mobile phones following legal guidelines, allowed by national legislations.

d) Time

The factor of time has three components: the innovation-decision process, the innovativeness, and the rate of adoption. The activation of the innovation-decision process follows a certain mental process towards the innovation: knowledge of it, attitude towards it, decision to use it, implementation and confirmation of the decision (Rogers, 2004). Innovativeness refers to the situation of an individual being earlier in the diffusion process compared to others in the same social group. Moreover, the rate of adoption is described as an S-shape cumulative adoption inside a population, where the factors to innovate play a major role in the various stages of adoption.

An innovation is introduced by an innovator who decides to develop and commercialize it. This is when the diffusion begins for a given population. The boundaries of the population are crucial to determine whether something is new or not. Early adopters are those who begin using that innovation, followed by an early majority, then a late majority and finally the laggards (Rogers, 2003). Each of those ideal types have unique characteristics in reference to the rest of the population. A generalization of the first three types of earlier adopters describes them as having higher levels of human, social, financial and cultural capital than the last two types of later adopters.

Suitability over time refers to the situation of the adopter (Hall, 2006). It is important to note the base line of the adopting population, because an innovation can be introduced or rejected according to existing cultural and social practices. At an individual level of adopters, this model has used two types of assumptions: consumer heterogeneity or consumer learning. With a diversity of consumers then the attention focuses on the drop in price; while with consumers learning, the attention is in the spread of the advantages inside the group.

2.4 | TOWARDS THE STUDY OF MIGRATION-RELATED INNOVATION AMONG ENTREPRENEURS

When researchers ask about the relationship between entrepreneurship and innovation, “the real question seems to be not whether entrepreneurs innovate, but rather, when and where they do so” (Autio et al., 2014, p. 1098). Elements borrowed from existing theoretical approaches guide the ideas being proposed in this study. The episodes of migration involve a change of geographical location over time with the process of carrying ideas across different cultures and societies. In that line, novel ideas seen in the businesses of migrant entrepreneurs are explored with the use of three building blocks: i) the attributes of an innovation, ii) the social contexts where they were introduced, and iii) the network channels used for that purpose. The analysis of those three topics is matched with the specific characteristics of the entrepreneur: innovativeness in function of the implementation of a business idea rooted in the migratory experience and other related life experiences.

2.4.1 | Attributes of novelties in the business ideas of migrants

Attributes of novelties refer to the characteristics of a product during the diffusion process, but they are assessed in different ways by particular social groups. The opportunity to introduce novel ideas could be seen as the best alternative in a particular context (Hall, 2006). But replication could also be a less-risk alternative, especially when the possibility for diffusion is blocked by a cultural practice, an authority or social influence (Rogers, 2004). The following five attributes are part of the basis of the model of diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 2003) and are explained in relation to the business ideas of migrants:

- a) The *relative advantage* of introducing a product by a migrant entrepreneur is explained from the economic profit, social status, the prevention role or complementary incentives (Rogers,

2003). The case of Islamic butchers illustrates the economic profit for both the migrants selling halal meat as well as the advantage for consumers who get access to a product that is otherwise unavailable in the local market (Kloosterman et al., 1999). The social status of entrepreneurs increases by using the identity of business owners as an occupational status inside the migrant community, and by using the figure of economic contributor inside the native social group (Aldrich, 2005; Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990).

- b) *Compatibility* is based on three conditions: cultural beliefs, past innovations and needs of the customers. Migrant entrepreneurs opt for strategies compatible with their target customers, among them specific groups inside the local population, and with their own ethnic population. Greater similarity in ethnic markets have been repeatedly described (Light & Gold, 2000; Vissak & Zhang, 2014). An example of compatibility with the native population is the case of Chinese migrant owners in the fashion industry in Italy who hire co-ethnics with informal contracts because such practices are tolerated when many Italian business owners act in a similar way, even if that is not compatible with the local legal regulations (Zhang & Zhang, 2016).
- c) The *complexity* is linked to the capacity of customers to understand its practical use. An example is the case of Taiwanese entrepreneurs in the computer service sector of Germany (Leung, 2001). The nature of their service is to provide specific support for large retailers, in the English language and with constant changes in the market. Customers expect the service only, while paying little attention to the complexity of adopting computer innovations happening behind walls.
- d) *Trialability* of a migrant business is connected to the ability to experiment with an innovation at a personal level. The case of exotic cuisine exemplifies this (Razin & Scheinberg, 2010). When eating at a Russian restaurant in Israel in the 1990s, Jewish customers had the possibility to try food with Eastern and Russian influence brought by the newly arrived. Over time, the consumption of particular dishes spread to those looking for a variety of gastronomic experience to integrate within their Jewish identity across the country.
- e) *Observability* is related to the capacity of customers to see the results of an innovation. Transnational connections facilitate the introduction of new products in a local market, but the publicity of those products facilitates their visibility. The niche of hairdressers is an example of visible results (Basu & Werbner, 2001): those businesses being the first in European cities to cut, treat and style curly hair get higher diffusion among migrant or native populations with African origin.

2.4.2 | Context matters for migrants: opening and closure for novel ideas

Following scholars in the topic of migrant entrepreneurship, the approach allowing us to look at the wide opportunity structures is mixed embeddedness (Dheer, 2018; Jones et al., 2014; Kloosterman & Rath, 2014). As described previously, other authors with a focus on ethnic markets have provided valuable understanding of the support and role of ethnic-based communities for entrepreneurs as well as safe niches for their economic ventures (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990; Light & Gold, 2000; Logan et al., 2002; Zhou & Portes, 1993). But they fall short when looking at

the variety of business activities and growing economic niches in relation to the receiving local societies (Kloosterman & Rath, 2014; Rath et al., 2017). In the mixed-embeddedness literature, different countries are studied (Jones, Ram, Edwards, Kiselinchev, & Muchenje, 2012; Leung, 2001; Rath & Swagerman, 2016); a variety of sectors of the economy have already been noticed, such as the presence of migrants in the garment industry or in import-export (Rath, 2005; Solano, 2016b); and the study of second generation entrepreneurs and transnational connections is included (Bagwell, 2018; Rusinovic, 2008). Kloosterman & Rath (2001, p. 199) suggest studying the business of migrants as they noticed the increasing role of innovative improvements when migrants introduced goods and services into the local economies.

The two main elements of the opportunity structure are the socio-economic conditions and the political institutions. The opportunity structure is seen from the institutional assemblage as well as the openings in the local markets where migrants are distributed. Actors are matched based on their capacities and resources, according to their different social, cultural, human and financial capital. Empirical research found a large number of migrant entrepreneurs in the lower end of the opportunity structure (Kloosterman, 2010) where business were run on low qualifications of migrants as well as small investments. But for second-generation entrepreneurs, opportunities were framed by their transnational connections as well as the understanding of the local context (Rusinovic, 2008).

The openings and closures for innovation can be seen from the element of the opportunity structure at the national, regional and local levels. At the national level, there are several aspects to be considered: country regulations and permits to start and operate an innovative business, personal needs provided by the state or by private companies, labour market regulations for employers and employees, and social mobility in the social structure for entrepreneurs (Antonioli, Mazzanti, & Pini, 2009; Lang, 2018; Ram et al., 2017). At a regional or urban level, important aspects are: specialization of geographically-clustered companies, economic dependence on global chains, and the level of connection with other regions and economic sectors (Chatterji, Glaeser, & Kerr, 2014; Dawkins, 2008; Zhang & Zhang, 2016). Finally, spatial distribution of native and migrant populations and (in)formal practices related to the regeneration of neighbourhoods are crucial at a neighbourhood level (Kuppinger, 2014; Toruńczyk-Ruiz, 2014). At all levels, political actors, institutions and economic interests are interacting, opening or closing for the initiatives of (migrant) entrepreneurs. Defining the boundaries of each of the levels is crucial for the characterization of something new, especially given that migrants are newcomers to existing socio-economic and political structures. Looking beyond these nationality-based boundaries is an opportunity to frame the novelties in relation to the wide opportunity structure.

2.4.3 | Social connections as channels of communication for innovation

The last topic is the use of social connections in a given context. Existing connections are not only used for economic purposes, but as emotional, legal and cultural support for businesses (Burt, 2000). In the mixed-embeddedness approach, those (ethnic) connections are used to identify the business opportunities and the flow of ideas, resources, and information (Kloosterman et

al., 1999; Rath et al., 2017). In a similar manner, Rogers (2004) argues that the role of diverse social connections is to provide new ideas, which can be used for business as innovation. His model of diffusion of innovations has been updated and improved (Bruland & Mowery, 2006; Hall, 2006), refining the fluctuating role of communication channels as providers of information and resources inside certain boundaries (Rogers, 2004).

Networks seem to offer positive outcomes to establish a business (Greve & Salaff, 2003), and at the same time to become a capsule inside a tight social group, i.e. community entrepreneurship (Welter, 2011). Seeing from the desired results for innovation, networks' diversity contributes to the possibility of exchanging new information through ties connecting to other people (Granovetter, 2005). Such connections are useful for three main reasons (Granovetter, 1985): one, they already exist so they have low or no cost involved; two, they are reliable; and three, their information is rich and detailed. The connections between different groups, or structural holes, offers the possibility to build bridges among different groups (Podolny, 2001), but nonetheless they also require work to be maintained and developed over various stages of entrepreneurship (Greve & Salaff, 2003).

Conversely, novelties may be hindered because actors tend to be locked out from diversity, as they spend time in similar cultural circles, frequenting similar places and interacting with similar others (Burt, 2000; Neil & Swedberg, 2005; Zhan, Bendapudi, & Hong, 2015). Such homogenous groups provide reinforcement, opinion, information and resources (Burt, 2004), and at the same time being part of a group contributes to building trust among members (Hoang & Antoncic, 2003). As this happens within ethnic communities, migrant entrepreneurs are provided with support, creation of weak market niches and employment opportunities for homogenous members (Fullin, 2011; Kloosterman, 2010).

Two main components can be derived from the previous paragraphs: diversity is useful and trust is needed. Having social connections in one or various social contexts seems to be decisive to identify business opportunities such as innovation (Solano, 2015; Vacca et al., 2018). At the same time, the embeddedness of entrepreneurs with reliable transnational or diaspora social connections allows a vital flow of resources and information. Recent research has tried to identify which combination of personal connections is more useful for developing and implementing innovative ideas (Herstad, 2017; Ladkin, Willis, Jain, Clayton, & Marouda, 2016; Vissak & Zhang, 2014). So far, the role of close personal contacts seems to provide emotional support but at the same time their homogeneity prevents disruptive and risky innovations.

Those diverse sources for creating new ideas could be activated by different paths of communication leading to an adoption of innovative ideas in different places or different social groups (Rogers, 2002). The model of diffusion of innovations proposes five stages in the decision-making process to introduce an innovation (Rogers, 2003): knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation. Nonetheless, Rogers explains the lack of evidence for those stages to be applicable in all the processes of introducing an innovation. His book shows evidence supporting the existence of the knowledge stage and the decision stage. Thus, I elaborate further about the role of similar and diverse connections in those two processes.

a) Business connections in the knowledge stage

The knowledge stage refers to being “exposed to an innovation’s existence and gain an understanding of how it functions” (Rogers, 2003, p. 171). To learn the details about the way that an innovation operates constitutes an advantage against business competitors. At this knowledge stage, the important aspect is to be aware of the potential and the pitfalls of adopting an innovation. Such evaluation of an innovation is not only related to the economic advantage, but also constrained by the impact within social groups, for example the consequences of changing traditions. Rogers proposes three types of knowledge: the awareness that an innovation exists, the understanding about the way an innovation operates, and the understanding about the underlying principles behind its functioning. This typology is useful to provide some clues about the way that entrepreneurs are informed about an innovation.

Being informed that an innovation exists is closely related to the availability of communication channels used to transmit information. Social connections and media are among the most important channels to inform about novelties (Rogers, 2004). Media contributes to the spread of messages about the existence of products in the market. For example, a newspaper containing entire sections about new developments in science and technology, or covering novelties in the local economy. But media is limited to the target audience that they inform, as well as by the reception of the audience to their messages. Social connections seem to provide a more accurate influence on potential innovators (Rogers, 2003). The influence of personal connections is trustworthy as their information is taken as credible in the first instance (Granovetter, 2005). When it comes to understanding how novel ideas operate, the influence of other actors gains more importance. The exchange of privileged information about the know-how of an innovation is reserved to members of the same group, or to people interested in the same topic. The interaction of people interested in similar topics generates homophily, which means the tendency to be similar to the innovators in terms of higher social status and higher level of education (Rogers, 2003). The role of education becomes a strong predictor of being informed of about a particular innovation, though the adoption of it is not always guaranteed.

Finally, novel ideas have underlying ways of working that are only understood or activated in relation to a specific set of conditions. An individual action to know the principles is to use the previous experience of having used a similar product in the past. A social action includes the involvement of business connections to gather detailed information and a diverse set of consequences about a certain (innovative) product. Such social interaction increases the chances of adoption by gathering accurate information about the innovation and positive perspectives of its adoption; but at the same time those connections can help to reject that innovation because of their previous experience or because they do not see their economic viability for increasing revenues.

b) Business connections in the decision stage

The decision stage is an individual action where social influence clearly shapes the outcome. For some contexts, the individual actor has a larger pool of possibilities to define when, how and what to adopt based on previous experience and resources; but for some other contexts,

the individual actor can be constrained by the decision of other people pushing him or her to adopt something. The role of existing norms and their enforcement impacts the decision stage to adopt an innovation. Despite the contexts and the influence, at the end there are only two alternatives: to confirm the adoption of an innovation, or to reject it (Rogers, 2003).

The knowledge stage usually comes before the decision stage, especially when it comes to the translation of an innovative idea into a business initiative. Decisions to innovate are usually linked to newly created firms, which are normally small in size (Ramella, 2015b). But those small and marginal firms need to go through the process of getting to know an innovation in order to adopt it and test it in the market. Big companies have R&D departments to take care of such processes, but many migrant businesses are either self-employed persons or micro firms (Leung, 2001; Nestorowicz, 2012). For migrant entrepreneurs, the context is clearly a factor pushing the decision to adopt or reject an innovation. Migrant firms, in many cases small and marginal, require a knowledge stage to be aware of innovative products to offer in their business initiative. Plus, they require resources to introduce an innovative idea to the market. Businesses situated at the borderlines between heterogeneous social and economic circles have increased opportunities to introduce new ideas across those circles and exploit those business openings (Ramella, 2015b). Migrant entrepreneurs, once informed about the existence and operation of a product, can decide to test the economic value of their service. Transnational studies of migration have repeatedly found migrants exchanging ideas, resources and products across sending and receiving societies (Aliaga-Isla & Rialp, 2013; Schiller et al., 1995; Waldinger, 2013). Some migrant entrepreneurs could make use of that situation, keeping business connections with people in their countries of past and present residence (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). Thus, the decision stage is important to find out the way that ideas crossing geographical locations become innovative businesses (or not).

2.5 | THE POSITION OF MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS IN RELATION TO THE REST OF THE FACTORS

Opportunities to introduce novel ideas are created with the combination of the previously explained factors: the attributes of novelty, the situation of the context(s), and the structure of social connections. The decision to innovate is also influenced by the personal characteristics of the economic actor, a migrant entrepreneur in this case. When an innovation is introduced, the adoption inside a social group is described as following an S-shape distribution with five ideal types of adopters: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards (Rogers, 2015). Matching migrant entrepreneurs to each ideal type needs to be corroborated with empirical material, and existing studies are used to place them on those scales. In the following lines, I follow these types of innovativeness to match existing cases of migrant entrepreneurs in a given time and location. The same group of migrant entrepreneurs who act at different times and locations could be re-categorized according to the innovations that are being studied.

a) Innovators

They are characterized as individuals with higher education levels, social status, and economic positions who venture with risky ideas, have cosmopolitan lifestyles and play a gatekeeping role among different social groups (Rogers, 2003). For example, the high-end technology of companies in Silicon Valley has been fuelled by the recruitment, on a global scale, of migrants with specific skills using ethnic connections among existing employees (Saxenian, 2002, 2007). Using previous research, transnational boundaries play a major role in the following case. In research in Bangladesh on the case of Grameenphone there are the elements fitting this category (Rana & Elo, 2017). The founder belongs to a diaspora in the US and has ample migratory experience, a high level of education and extended social capital. The founding partners managed to create an influential connection of actors around them to secure funding, local resources for operations, access to regional markets and institutional change. Combining forces, the innovation was introduced, a monopoly in the market was secured for a certain time, and their role as innovators has shifted to managers of a big corporation.

b) Early adopters

Early adopters show stronger ties to the society, with a strong position as opinion leaders and usually being consulted by others for advice (Rogers, 2003). They are able to decrease the uncertainty to adopt a new idea and act as role models to the rest of the social group. The cases of gelato and pizza by Italian entrepreneurs in Frankfurt, Germany show some of those aspects (Storti, 2014): both food products were already known to the German population, facilitating the boom of shops among certain cities from the 1970s onwards. While gelato was advertised as an authentic Italian product, pizza was adapted to include local ingredients. The owners of the first ice-cream parlours used their position as opinion leaders among migrants of northern Italy and recruited Italian staff based on ethnic connections. On the other hand, owners of pizzerias changed their products by using local products, hiring a German workforce and targeting a wider audience. New marketing strategies were mixed with conventional organisation –at least for the German market– of the companies. In these cases, the products themselves were something ordinary within the Italian migrant community, but the companies introduced new forms of labour organisation and used new marketing strategies to brand their gelato and pizza. While in reference to other Italian migrants, using German labour force involved new ways of organizing employees.

c) Early majority

Rogers (2003) refers to the early majority as those who weigh advantages and disadvantages when innovating and decide to adopt after testing. Being aware of that, they create barriers for those following them, so they can gain momentarily from their advantageous position. Migrant entrepreneurs who replicate successful ideas could fit this description. Examples of this kind of entrepreneurs are the Wenzhou migrants interacting with Italian culture (Zhang & Zhang, 2016). They were able to innovate in the production chain of garments, shoes, bags and furniture with unique designs matched with the branding “Made in Italy”. They also introduced

new distribution of raw material when using their ethnic contacts, and employed mixed strategies to recruit a highly-qualified ethnic and non-Italian workforce. Migrant entrepreneurs accumulated work experience in those sectors and used their human and social capital to scale their businesses. The organisational model was quickly spread to other members in the ethnic group, decreasing the novelty though maintaining ethnic barriers to keep their position against competitors.

d) Late majority

Rogers (2003) describes this group as adopters of innovation because of economic necessity, peer pressure or replication. Initially portraying a sceptical attitude towards the novelty, they are reached in later stages after half of the population has already adopted an innovation. At this point, the innovation is in a process of being known and replicative for the consumers. Because it is difficult to arbitrarily set a time frame of diffusion, historical cases provide a better perspective, e.g. the transnational shipping-transportation business between Eastern Europe and North Italy (Ambrosini, 2012). Entrepreneurs import ethnic goods to satisfy the needs of the migrant community as well as export products from the receiving country intended for the family of the migrant in the sending country. In the case of Italy, a group of Romanian entrepreneurs are described as being the pioneers of new distribution routes for people and cargo in small, new and rapid vehicles between northern Italy and Eastern European countries. Moldavian entrepreneurs took their place as a late majority who replicated the distribution model, though with fewer financial resources and older vehicles.

e) Laggards

Rogers (2003) describes laggards as those who prefer traditions and are comfortable without change. Their resistance to innovation is usually explained by a scarcity of economic resources and by an isolated position inside the social group. Marginal groups are often found to be the last consumers of an innovation. An example fitting into this category is the case of Ghanaians in the Netherlands (Kloosterman et al., 2016). Despite their high education levels, they share a marginal position combined with a lack of information in markets and regulations. As a consequence, they cannot profit from business mentorship, a strong ethnic market, or the know-how to deal with administration. Such circumstances have pushed them to lower levels of the market, where replication of low-revenue business are common.

2.6 | CONCLUSION

Novel ideas from migrant entrepreneurs are strongly influenced by changes in geographical location and cultural practices that people face over time, on their journeys. Connecting those individual experiences with other factors has influenced the three main building blocks used in this study: i) the attributes of an innovation, ii) the social context in which they were introduced, and iii) the network channels used for business purposes. Their combination allows us to assess

the opportunities of a novel idea being introduced by migrant entrepreneurs. Business ideas of entrepreneurs could be better explained matching those opportunities with the individual action, the latter being framed by the characteristics of migrants in terms of economic, social, cultural and political aspects.

Many migrant entrepreneurs display business ideas based on experiences from their country of origin, some of which are new business ideas for the social context of the country of destination, and some are a mere replication of other entrepreneurs. Their level of innovativeness is subject to changes over time and over contextual boundaries: for example, it will be different when the point of reference is the membership of an ethnic community, or the membership of a mainstream native group. (Innovative) business ideas inspired by migratory experience could also create opportunities for entrepreneurs in their own country to transfer knowledge and profit from being an early adopter. The experience of migration becomes the source of inspiration in several aspects: innovative business ideas, development of individual characteristics and identification of opportunities in a given social context (Bosetti et al., 2015; Jensen, 2014; Saxenian, 2007).

The approaches of mixed embeddedness and the model of diffusion of innovations complement each other with concepts used in the study of migrant entrepreneurs. On the one hand, extending the mixed-embeddedness approach is advantageous given its focus on the field of migrant entrepreneurship. Previous research can be used to re-evaluate the findings and frame them with the lens of diffusion of innovations triggered by migration. On the other hand, the model of diffusion of innovations contributes with typologies based on empirical evidence following the adoption of new products (Rogers, 2004). Starting from the description of the context, entrepreneurs who are innovators or early adopters are followed, in an S-shaped distribution, by those who are less innovative. Furthermore, by adding a network perspective between social groups, more innovative entrepreneurs are (or are near to) key contacts who provide a higher speed of diffusion, diverse information and opportunities among distinct social groups (Burt, 2000). Usually those with higher levels of innovativeness have the tendency to understand social systems in different localities (Rogers, 2003), create trust, awareness and interest among groups (Burt, 2004), and join ideas from unrelated groups (Jones et al., 2012).

Technological innovations are created by entrepreneurs with high levels of human, social, financial and cultural capital (Rogers, 2003). At the same time, opportunities to innovate can be identified in the differences in information and experience, among individuals with different level of education, past work experience or social status. Novel ideas from human capital are connected to a high level of education (Hunt, 2011; Kloosterman, 2010) or extensive work experience (Antonioletti et al., 2009; Bosetti et al., 2015). Novel ideas using social capital have been seen in cases where bonding with other innovative and heterogeneous people increases the capacity to bridge information across social groups (Betts et al., 2015; Burt, 2004; Saxenian, 2002). Novelties using financial capital describe the availability of necessary monetary means for testing new products or for research and development of promising ideas (Baumol, 2002; Rusinovic, 2008). Last, innovation from cultural capital refers to the capacity to adapt traditional or ethnic practices into innovative practices in another social group (Hovhannisyan & Keller, 2014; Zhang & Zhang, 2016).

With these contributions from previous studies, the building blocks to explore novel ideas among migrant entrepreneurs are proposed. This assemblage of existing theoretical models needs to be confirmed, and the way to do so is with further empirical material from multiple research methods (Dheer, 2018; Hoang & Antoncic, 2003). Separately, each of the building blocks has been previously used in empirical research on entrepreneurs; but together, there is a need for a comprehensive case where all aspects are included for the specificity of migrant entrepreneurs. Ram et al. (2017) suggest that some studies could be disconnected from empirical material, but this study provides evidence about the processes introducing novel ideas as business products from the experience of migrating.

Following on the recommendation in the previous paragraph, the study of migration-related innovation in modern times could be a fertile ground when related to services introduced by migrant entrepreneurs. Innovation has been commonly studied in primary and secondary sectors of the economy, where tangible products are produced and manufactured (Bruland & Mowery, 2006; Malerba, 2006; von Tunzelmann & Acha, 2006). The nature of tangible products allows the traceability of their added value over time (Rogers, 2015), offering the possibility to study their changes over time and their adaptation to different geographical scenarios (Greve & Salaff, 2003). In contrast, the tertiary sector is harder to trace because most of the services are intangible (Miles, 2009). Services, ranging from low skills to IT-intensive sectors, are often combined with the preparation of a tangible or digital product, and this interaction is hard to separate.

The introduction of novel business ideas would provide migrant entrepreneurs with a cutting-edge advantage against competitors, but research about this topic is thin on the ground. I propose that the opportunity of migrant entrepreneurs to introduce novelties is better understood by a closer look at the business idea itself and to what extent it is innovative; by considering the contextual factors where the opportunity structure influences the development of migrant businesses; and by the existence of social connections to share resources and information among entrepreneurs. Such complementary concepts –combining the interaction of the social, human, cultural and financial resources of individual migrants in relation to the wider opportunity structure– provide a comprehensive understanding of the opportunity for entrepreneurs to innovate.

There are certain clues to go further in the study of the role of migrant entrepreneurs in innovation. Migrant entrepreneurs select their businesses by taking an active role in looking for better conditions available under the context in which they are operating, whether they do this inside their ethnic community only or also in the mainstream local consumer. All actors play inside local and national legal frameworks that act as barriers and openings for entrepreneurs to start a company. With many migrant entrepreneurs being part of co-national circles, they can make an early identification of the opportunities for novel products inside those migrant or ethnic markets, and at the same time they are creating a demand for a certain product that could be attractive to other customers in the mainstream market. Strategies to target a certain type of market are not always explicit and properly thought through, and it is unclear whether that choice facilitates the survival of those businesses over time. What is clear is

that novel business ideas might spread to other markets and such a situation will push other entrepreneurs to replicate this advantage in the market until it is saturated. Novel ideas could benefit from a certain context and certain social connections, and the cases selected for this study will show the opportunities for migrant entrepreneurs to introduce and adapt novel ideas in their receiving locations.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and research design

To contribute with empirical evidence using the theoretical framework explained above, this research project followed established methodological procedures. The design was divided into four balancing processes. Each of those processes followed the necessary protocols to comply with the collection, storage and analysis of data. This chapter provides an overview of the decisions taken and the reasons behind them.

The first process was the design of the interview guide for both locations and the respective adaptation to the Italian and Dutch cases, with the necessary translations. The second process was the selection of potential migrant entrepreneurs and the recruitment of actual participants for the interviews. The third and fourth processes were the collection of qualitative and network data in coherent databases for further analysis. The fifth and final process was the analysis of the data, following the research questions for each of the empirical chapters.

In this section, I provide a general description of the processes for data collection and data storage. For the process of data analysis, each of the empirical chapters contains a section of methodology that provides an accurate and detailed description of the variables created as well as the data used for the arguments. Annex 11.1 provides the answers to some of the most common questions regarding the management of data. This document was provided by the Research Data Management Team from the University of Amsterdam and filled in with their guidance and feedback.

3.1 | DESIGN OF DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Two main considerations were present throughout the whole research design. The first corresponds to the term *migrant entrepreneur* being divided into its two component words. To operationalize *migrant*, this research followed the line of nationality distinction: all foreigners whose nationality is different from the nationality of the country where the research takes place (IOM, n.d.), in this case the countries of Italy and the Netherlands. Someone born in one country and living in another is usually labelled as a *first generation migrant* (Aliaga-Isla & Rialp, 2013; Saxenian, 2002), and their children are called *second generation* (Rusinovic, 2006). The term *entrepreneur* is applied to those who started their own organisation in the form of a businesses or company (Thornton, 1999), and are registered as being the sole owner or one of the founding partners (Dheer, 2018).

The second consideration relates to the features of the company owned by the migrant entrepreneur. It was expected that a large number of migrant businesses are in the range of micro and small companies (Ambrosini, 2013; Dheer, 2018; Herstad, 2017), thus some attention was given to the selection of the cases. One point was related to the ownership of the business: the entrepreneur needed to be the only owner or to have a majority in the partition of shares. In the case of self-employment without employees, having more than one customer was required. This avoided the selection for an interview of a self-employed person who had landed in such a situation due to flexibility rules allowing the outsourcing of activities from bigger companies to individual one-person companies. Another point was related to the size of the staff, being

applied when the company had employees, with specific questions about the collaboration in either formal employment relationships or informal collaboration partnerships. A last point taken into account was the economic sector where entrepreneurs were operating. As explained in the theoretical section, the selection involved the search for businesses offering a service, either to individual customers or to other companies. In sum, the framing of cases for this study was directed towards micro and small businesses with migrant owners, where the novel ideas are seen from the perspective of the individual migrant entrepreneur who makes such decisions. The aggregated effect of a managerial level in the company is out of the scope for this study, reducing the analysis of the complex interaction when several individuals are interacting inside each company.

Once the requirements were set for the search of potential respondents, the design of the data collection tool began. Semi-structured interviews were chosen with a design that was able to adapt to the questions focused on three main type of data (Rusinovic, 2006; Solano, 2016a; Vacca et al., 2018): survey-type questions to gather socio-economic data from the entrepreneurs and the company, open-ended questions to gather personal opinions about their businesses, and relational questions to gather the socio-economic data of the alters in the personal networks of migrants. The design of the questions was largely based on the Community Innovation Survey (OECD / EuroStat, 2005) which can be found in the website of EUROSTAT. The adaptation of the questions aimed to capture novel business ideas with the use of the semi-structured interview guide. Other questions were added to obtain a detailed description of the products and services offered by migrants, and to capture their personal motivation to open such types of businesses (Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, McKinney, & Morse, 2012). Concentric circles and networks rosters were used to gather information about the business connections and their characteristics (Herz, Peters, & Truschkat, 2014). The interview became a one-time measure of the situation of migrant entrepreneurs at that particular time and in that particular geographical location; nonetheless, the questions were designed to gain an insight into the activities in the past and into their opinion of future scenarios.

Two models of questionnaire were used in this study. The first model was intended to obtain a larger amount of information, such as the characteristics within the business and of the individual migrant entrepreneur, with the major use of survey-style questions with pre-coded answers and categories. To polish the first model of the questionnaire, faculty members of NASP-ESLS provided feedback and improved the format of questions, with special attention to the characteristics of the companies. After incorporating the changes and recommendations, a test was conducted with two migrant entrepreneurs in the centre of Brescia – who were also my neighbours. The first model of the interview guide was originally designed in English, with a translation to Italian that was completed in collaboration with a colleague. Finally, another colleague suggested including questions about the social mood of entrepreneurs since it contributed to a parallel study. The interview guide for Brescia can be found in Annex 11.2.

The second model of the questionnaire is the version applied in Amsterdam. The interview was modified to include the lessons learned from the data collection carried out in Brescia. English was the language chosen for this interview guide. Two main aspects were reviewed from the

previous version: one, the time constraint to conduct an interview, with the proper introduction and closing formalities, to gain trust and smoothen the collection of complex and sensitive information; and two, the willingness of the respondents to answer all the questions due to the interference with their working hours. As a result, the questions were re-ordered and shortened to make a smoother introduction for the respondents; the questions related to social mood were eliminated; and the concentric circles were changed for a network roster. The rest of the questions were reformulated to gather open answers in the topics of motivation and selection of business as well as in the migratory trajectory. The result was a semi-structured interview, with mainly open questions and a few pre-coded options for answers. The interview guide for Amsterdam can be found in Annex 11.3.

3.2 | IN THE SEARCH FOR MIGRANT BUSINESSES

For both locations, the target was set to reach as many migrant entrepreneurs as possible in the service sector. But, as part of the research design, the strategies used differed according to the location (Amsterdam or Brescia). The main difference between them was the starting point to look for respondents: starting with an existing official database, or starting with the online presence of the businesses. Both urban centres are described below with an explanation of the decisions taken during the process. Overall, the selection of respondents followed the logic of finding the most representative cases to be able to work with details of their personal characteristics as well as their relation with the context (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Qualitative material from small samples was prioritized over large samples; and at the same time ego-alter networks were favoured to obtain network data for a visualization of the cases (Crossley et al., 2015; Stark & Krosnick, 2017). The choice to find them was dependent on the condition of each location and driven by the availability and costs of sources of information, the time and resources available, and the target for a particular group of migrant entrepreneurs.

For the case of Brescia, the migrant entrepreneur fitting the description needed for this research was less visible than other businesses with presence in the streets and markets, such as food or clothing stores. Companies providing services are located in offices around the city, where observation to look for cases is not possible; and their presence online is limited to certain companies who attracted clients in that way. Therefore, the best solution was to gather information from the Chamber of Commerce in Brescia. Luckily, there is an agreement where the University of Brescia is able to receive information from the Chamber of Commerce, and they agreed to extract a list of businesses in the service sector who have foreign owners.

Being part of the Research Group on Experimental and Computational Sociology at the University of Brescia facilitated the creation of a research team between June and November 2016 who took care of collecting data. From the database of the Chamber of Commerce of Brescia, 929 potential participants were identified following a random selection divided into three rounds: one at the beginning of June, one at the end of July and the last at the beginning of September. Letters of invitation were sent in Italian, with the invitation to win a gift-card when agreeing and

inviting more respondents. The response rate was 8.5%, corresponding to 79 participants, of which only 75 were finally interviewed due to 4 last-minute cancellations. Such a low response rate can be explained by several reasons: the informality of businesses that are registered to an address while the actual business does not operate from there; migrants being unfamiliar with being asked questions by the university; and the lack of trust for their businesses being part of research. One last reason could be the period when they were contacted, as it overlapped with the summer period when many businesses take vacations.

When the process of data collection in Amsterdam started, the process in Brescia was already more than half-completed. Lessons were learned from that process and the situation of this new city was taken into account. The expertise and advice from colleagues at the University of Amsterdam connected me with various possible routes for data collection. I moved to Amsterdam in May 2016, to carry on with the preparations for the fieldwork of the second case. The starting point was various digital lists of businesses, many of which seemed to be owned by foreigners. At the same time, an inquiry was made to the Dutch Chamber of Commerce, but their fee was very high and there was a high protection level of contact details of individual owners. The choice was made to use websites where the contact details of service businesses were hosted. The selection was focused on businesses operating on two websites offering news and advice for migrants, Angloinfo and Dutchnews. Contact details, such as phone numbers, emails, names of owners and names of companies, were stored in an Excel file. Emails and phone calls were used to invite 178 business owners for an interview and to briefly explain the goal of the research. 22 key contacts were asked to circulate the call for participants inside the Chambers of Commerce of various nationalities operating in the Netherlands: British, Indian, American, Turkish, Surinamese, Canadian and Spanish. In addition, emails were sent to co-working spaces and business networks such as Amsterdam Hub, WeWork, B., KnowMads, ACE and Amsterdam Mamas. Those who agreed to participate were asked to meet at a café near their offices, at a time convenient for them, to talk for 90 minutes. 44 participants were interviewed in total between September 2016 and February 2017.

3.3 | THE RESPONSES

The third process of the research design involved the collection of the responses that came once the interviews were completed. The steps described here were similar for both locations. The first step was to give codes for each interview, using an Excel table where the contact details of the respondents were stored. After all interviews were completed, a new list was created to assign new codes to each respondent, but this time without the contact details in order to create a two-step barrier protecting the privacy of personal details of the respondents.

For each interview, the migrant business was labelled with one of the following sub-sectors inside services: professional consultancy, IT sector, support to companies, cleaning, education and recreation, and personal care. By doing this, there was the possibility to remove the

interviews that did not have the provision of services as the main focus, so all cases with the labels restaurants or preparation of food were eliminated.

Another filter was to check the country of origin of the respondents. Given that the attention was given to first generation migrants, the interviews conducted with second-generation entrepreneurs were excluded. As explained earlier, the importance of looking at first-generation migrants lies in their experience of having lived in their country of origin or in another location before moving to the country of destination where they were interviewed as part of this project. For the case of Brescia in particular, one associated extra filter was applied because a couple of entrepreneurs were indeed born in another country than Italy but their parents were Italians who were working in that country and took them back to Italy as minors. The final selection resulted in a sample of 70 interviews for Brescia and 41 for Amsterdam; it was at this stage where the new list was created with new codes to match the files that were being created for each case and to ensure the anonymity of respondents' contact and personal details. Digital files with the information from each interview were created for each location, while the original interviews on paper were stored in a locker: In Brescia the locker was located inside the PhD office room of the Faculty of Business and Economy of the University, and in Amsterdam in the locker of the PhD flex-office of the Faculty of Sociology. At the end of the research, all Italian original interviews were transferred from Brescia to Amsterdam and trusted to the physical archive of the UvA where they can be stored for the following ten years. Having all the interviews together allowed for a quick check of the original material when doubts appeared during the process of analysing the information. After the research was completed, the original files are stored securely. Digital copies of the databases are available in Surfdribe for further research projects.

The files created digitally were stored on one external drive, with a working copy stored on the laptop on which the analysis was carried out. This laptop complied with security measures to prevent leaks and to guarantee backups of the data in case of technical problems. The types of digital files created were: Excel files with a table of all the characteristics of each entrepreneur, audio files with short transcripts, and CSV files for the relational data. The responses from the first model of the interview were stored in Excel files, with one general database with three worksheets for all the respondents from Brescia. The responses from the second model of the interview became a database with two worksheets for all those from Amsterdam. Both databases were cleaned and coded using STATA; the codebook for each can be seen in the same Annex 11.2 and 11.3 with the questions from the interview guide. Segments of the recording were transcribed into .docx files with the corresponding code for each respondent. The answers to open-ended questions related to the motivation of starting a business and innovation were used as quotes inserted in the following chapters. In a simultaneous process, the network data (concentric circles and rosters) was converted into matrixes and stored in CSV files, which are compatible with and can be read by software such as Gephi, R and UCInet. Each of those CSV files has a code for the connections to match the ID of each respondent and their business connections.

A by-product of this third process was the creation of personalized brochures that were given to the respondents as a token of appreciation. Such a gesture was suggested by previous

research in the field (Solano, 2012) and it turned out to be very valued by respondents when they were told that they would receive back their own information. Their reaction was positive because they were able to see the way their network characteristics were processed and get a glimpse of their own situation. Their personal networks were processed in categories including age, nationality, place of residence, level of studies and language proficiency. Then, personal graphics were created with a brief description in percentages of the composition of their personal connections as well as their self-assessment of innovativeness. The design of the brochure preserved anonymity when trying to identify the personal connections of each respondent. Overall, the feedback from emails and oral responses were positive, with respondents appreciating that their information can be used as part of academic research, and that their networks were comprehensible and visually attractive. One example from Brescia and another from Amsterdam can be found in Annex 11. 4.

3.4 | DATABASES TO MAKE SENSE OF THE BIG PICTURE

All the information collected constitutes primary data from the source of migrant entrepreneurs themselves. There are two types of data after the collection and process of all the interviews. One is the qualitative data from the answers stored in text files. This data amounts to 70 files for the case of Brescia and 41 files for the case of Amsterdam. This data was anonymized in the process to avoid the easy identification of the respondents, according to the agreement explained by the interviewers when gathering the material (see interview guides in Annex 11.2 and 11.3 for the coding of variables and confidentiality agreements). This qualitative data can be easily read by any text processors: Microsoft Word and Excel were used for this research.

The second type of data is the quantitative data coming from the numeric answers to the survey-style questions of the interviews. The sample in both locations was small and did not allow complex statistical regressions due to the lack of validity for generalisations. Still, many variables were transformed into a quantitative dataset to be able to analyse them and use them as descriptive statistics for the sample. The most valuable quantitative dataset is the data of ego-alter connections. Network data is used to build the social structure in which migrant entrepreneurs are embedded (Vacca et al., 2018), and to compare individual characteristics of the respondents (Ego) together with those of the people in their connections (Alters). Both cases contain individual files about age, sex, level of education, nationality, place of residence and level of closeness. The case of Brescia consists of 70 Ego sets with 284 Alter sets, while the case of Amsterdam consists of 41 Ego sets with 509 Alter sets. In total, in this research there are files collecting the relations and characteristics from 904 individuals nested in each of the 101 interviews of migrant entrepreneurs.

3.5 | ANALYSIS OF DATA TO MAKE SENSE OF THE NOVEL BUSINESS IDEAS

Each of the empirical chapters is focused on one of the three building blocks of the theoretical framework, and it contains its own section about the analysis of the information. Because both locations following a similar process of data collection and data management, the details about data analysis are not explained in detail here. This way it is easier to follow the type of data used for each case and the location where it was collected. In the following paragraphs, I provide a very short summary of the type of analysis performed for each chapter.

Chapter 4 deals with the features of the products being offered. Life stories from migrant entrepreneurs in Amsterdam provide a suitable case where details about the services are contrasted with the openings available in the Dutch market. Products are seen as services with tangible and intangible components, and then analysed from the point of view of migrants' possibility to introduce something novel. Qualitative descriptions of the services are used in relation to five features: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, triability and observability. In each of those features, migrant entrepreneurs explain which of the elements of the service are novel for the market of Amsterdam, and which have been adapted from their own country of origin. The way that entrepreneurs go through a migratory experience influences the adaptation of the services, and this chapter shows the more relevant aspects in that process.

For chapter 5, based on the urban space of Brescia, the individual characteristics of the entrepreneurs were put into the context of the city to look at the opportunities and limitations for novel services. The interviews with migrant entrepreneurs illustrate the argument through descriptive statistics and contingency tables, while at the same time there is qualitative data providing details of the relation between entrepreneur and context. The urban space of Brescia is seen from the perspective of the migrant entrepreneur: institutional openings, socio-cultural reception and economic niches in the market. Novel ideas coming from the human, financial and social capital of the entrepreneurs are framed in the context of the city. Human capital was extrapolated from the level of education, previous work experience and language abilities; financial capital from the access to funds, whether through formal or informal sources; and social capital from belonging to social groups and associations. Crosstabs and other figures were created with Excel and Tableau, while some calculations were done with Stata.

The chapter 6 focused on the role of business connections uses the interviews to show two aspects: the formation of business ideas that could be a novelty for the local market, and the implementation of those ideas. For the first aspect, the case of Amsterdam illustrates the use of transnational and local connections in the adaptation of ideas into a novelty for the market. For the second aspect, the case of Brescia provides information about the role of employees, advisors and accountants when implementing those ideas in that urban market. The data used to illustrate these aspects is composed of networks among business contacts and quotes from open questions. Ego-network analysis was used to calculate the type of relationships between the migrant entrepreneurs and their business connections. Calculations of the scores of

similarity, based on R scripts from previous research (Vacca et al., 2018), illustrated the variables of country of origin as the main condition, and education and place of residence as secondary.

3.6 | VALIDITY AND LIMITATIONS OF THE METHODS

The methods used in this study have certain limitations. This section refers to those concerning the selection of the respondents and the generalization from the interviewed cases. Given that the selection of the respondents was done in Amsterdam and Brescia, each geographical location is expanded in different paragraphs. The limitations related to the results are expanded in each of the three empirical chapters to give a deeper explanation of the data and analyses used.

One important limitation is the definition of who an entrepreneur is and its linguistic nuance in other languages. An entrepreneur is defined in the literature as someone who starts a business, as explained earlier in the introductory chapter. This definition includes self-employment or informal business initiatives when being applied to empirical cases, and it can also be used as an adjective to describe a paid position, for example entrepreneurial manager, or having an entrepreneurial mind-set. Having such a situation in mind, the use of the concept 'entrepreneur' in different languages needed to be put in the right context and sometimes next to an adjective to clarify the type of entrepreneur: *zelfstandig ondernemer* for self-employment in Dutch; and *imprenditore commerciale / agricole* for entrepreneurs in general / those only in the agricultural sector in Italian. When looking for entrepreneurs, a detailed explanation was needed by phone, by letter or by email to make things clear among potential participants and among actors who helped to find participants. Still, some cases had to be rejected because they did not fit the criteria.

Another limitation that applies to both cases is the formality of the businesses: all cases are businesses registered in their respective countries. This means that informal business initiatives, where novel ideas could be also present, are not part of this study. With out-of-the-box business ideas, novel ideas and informal activities may take advantage of gaps in the market where there is loose control by local legislation. The legality of Uber in several countries (Rhodes, 2017) is an example of novel ideas challenging existing legislation. Using that example, there are certain cases of small- and medium-sized migrant businesses where some activities might be qualified as illegal or informal but are still novel ideas in those markets, e.g. the case of Islamic butchers that partially inspired the approach of mixed embeddedness. (Kloosterman et al., 1999) illustrates the novel practices of migrants that were resisted by local associations of meat producers until legislation was created to regulate them.

A last general limitation of this study is the use of *only* two urban locations to look at novel ideas of migrant entrepreneurs. As described in the introductory chapter, the topic of innovation and novel ideas is growing but still limited, so exploration of empirical cases contribute to theory building and evidence for further studies (as done in other scientific fields, e.g. Shakir, 2002). The goal of exploration for a deeper insight goes in line with complementarity: two

different cases provide a complementary overview of novel ideas of migrant entrepreneurs from different aspects. Having two locations implies that other geographical locations cannot be generalized from the findings of this study, but further research can certainly make use of the lessons learned in this study and replicate it, perhaps on a larger scale. In a related topic, the number of interviews collected could receive strong criticism from a quantitative point of view. For this study, the logic of small samples (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006) is followed to look at details that would be overlooked with standardized questionnaires, such as the descriptions of products based on the migratory experience of the entrepreneurs, or the explanation of continuous changes according to the wishes of clients. The 101 interviews from both locations provide rich information linking the personal experiences of migrants that are later developed as business ideas, and those questions follow a widely used guide such as the Oslo Manual (OECD / EuroStat, 2005).

The case of Brescia, in particular, had a very low response rate to our call for participants. This could be explained by factors related to the unwillingness or unfamiliarity of migrant entrepreneurs to share their information, since academic research on them is not a recurrent activity in this location (Lucarno, 2010). Also the timing of interviewing coincided with the summer vacations when the economic activity is replaced by trips to their countries of origin. In sum, more interviews would have increased the variety of nationalities in the sample as well as the variety of business ideas, but at the same time would have increased the time spent in processing and analysing the data. So given the time and resources, the existing respondents allow for a proper exploration of the unusual topic of novel business ideas in Brescia.

The case of Amsterdam provides a picture of the English-speaking segment of the market and has the limitation of not being generalizable to all types of migrant entrepreneurs in the city. As stated earlier, ethnic groups that attracted attention in past years (Rusinovic, 2008; Solano, 2016a) are not represented in the interviewed cases of this study because their presence has been largely incorporated in the Dutch context, so many of the business ideas of those who arrived many years ago have already been implemented. Also, other Dutch cities provide different socio-economic conditions and political arrangements at a local level, demanding a proper contextualization of the type of businesses interviewed in Amsterdam. Thus, the focus on newcomers who already have a business was an opportunity to explore novel ideas, although a limitation on its own.

CHAPTER 4

Novelties in the business services of migrant entrepreneurs

4.1 | INTRODUCTION

(...) I mean, my niche is very simple: I am the international English-speaking, and I happen to be English, photographer in Amsterdam for people from Germany, France, Italy, and America. Whoever is coming to Amsterdam to get something done photographically, they are looking to get something done, something reliable, they don't speak Dutch, they do not Google in Dutch and do not search in Dutch. A Dutch company searches in Dutch, Dutch people search in Dutch. That's normal. But foreigners, even French people, they search in English. I'm for the English market, and for people who are googling in English. They come even from Belgium, I get a lot from companies but also individuals.

Interview Code 101

Finding a niche of customers is of great importance for entrepreneurs, as can be read in the initial quote of this chapter. A niche market allows them to profit from the existing demand and to avoid competition with other entrepreneurs who are targeting other niches. These niche markets may be where qualities inherent to a migrant are created by the use of language, cultural traits or gastronomic preferences, for example. The case described above shows the tactic of using language skills to establish the business of being a photographer in a prominent position in the English-speaking market of Amsterdam; avoiding the competition with the Dutch-speaking market. The segmentation of the market involves the identification of common features that are repeated, such as the techniques of photography, but also others that are different, such as the use of language. In that scenario, features that cross different niches of the market could be seen as a novelty. Returning to what was explained earlier, economic innovation is defined as the introduction of something novel in the market (Hurt & Jones, 2005; Ramella, 2015b; Rogers, 2003). In this chapter, the features of the services being offered by migrant entrepreneurs are described in relation to the concept of attributes of innovation. Entrepreneurs, regardless of whether they are migrants or not, can bring different types of novelties across segments of the market: it can be a new good or service into a local market, a new organizational structure in a company, a new marketing strategy or a new production process. Those different types of novel ideas are identified in products and production processes that migrant entrepreneurs introduce in a given segment of the market. The concepts related to the attributes of innovation are contrasted with the products, processes and organisational aspects of migrant companies interviewed in Amsterdam. The guiding research question for this chapter is:

- vi) What are the attributes of the products that migrant entrepreneurs develop for their business? This question aims to look at certain aspects of the products being offered in the market: from those that show high levels of novelty to those showing mere replication.

Two main facets are highlighted by the research question: the boundaries of the market, and the dichotomy of novelty vs. replication. For the first one, the market is demarcated by geographical boundaries where the entrepreneurs operate, in this case the urban space of Amsterdam where most of their economic activities take place, but also the national space of the Netherlands as the boundary where business could also take place. More importantly, with the focus on migrants, national borders matter in order to look at flows of those who are born in the country and those who immigrate.

For the second aspect, novelty and replication are taken as opposite ideals and are used as reference points that are unlikely to be found in empirical cases. Economic products – services in this study – could include certain aspects that are mostly novel but at the same time include a repetition of aspects that are already offered by competitors in that segment. That is why it is important to use the attributes of the products as a first-step guide for the analysis of migrant entrepreneurship.

The description of the services brings to light the existing potential for migrant entrepreneurs, and at the same time the limitations existing in the services being offered. Overall, the human experience of migration is linked with the services that entrepreneurs provide, resulting in adaptation strategies using ideas they had prior or during migratory events (Nathan, 2015). The familiarity of entrepreneurs with being a migrant has provided them with (entrepreneurial) motivation and skills to pursue their business ideas. The novelties are contextualized in the tangible and intangible aspects that are mentioned by the entrepreneurs when providing their services in Amsterdam.

4

4.1.1 | Structure of the chapter

This chapter provides a description of the products using the first building block of the theoretical framework, namely the attributes of the innovation. The identification of the different aspects where migrant entrepreneurs have expressed having introduced something novel is the core of this chapter, but this does not involve an external evaluation of whether a service is innovative or not. Each of the 41 interviews is organized according to the five attributes, to provide an overview of the strategies, products and production processes used by entrepreneurs when making businesses in their target market, being for example niches with ethnic communities, with international businesses or with local (Dutch) mainstream market.

The qualitative methods of analysis used for this chapter are described in section 4.2, with further descriptive information collected from the interviews. This section finishes with short paragraphs about the validity of the methods used for this chapter. Next, section 4.3 provides a description of the individual characteristics of migrant entrepreneurs in relation to the contextual conditions where those businesses are active. In section 4.4, those services are matched in relation to the five attributes of innovation, showing the cases where those attributes correspond to business ideas implemented by migrant entrepreneurs. Section 4.5 uses the capacities and experience of those entrepreneurs in the process of adapting migratory experiences into business ideas. Finally, the conclusions are written in section 4.6 with a critical

reflection on the level of innovativeness as a fixed category, proposing instead the use of the attributes of the services to show the longitudinal changes and the process of re-creating business ideas.

4.2 | METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The selection of the migrant population was described in detail in the previous chapter. Most of the 41 migrant entrepreneurs interviewed in Amsterdam arrived in recent years and started their businesses with some previous experience of having a business. Part of the migratory process includes a degree of uncertainty with migrants choosing to find a job, to start a company or to do other activities. For those who start a company, the choice of the product they are providing is quite important. To be able to capture the motivations and the qualities of the products in the market, quotes from the interviews are used to illustrate the following sections.

The service sector was one of the general requisites to choose the type of business of migrant entrepreneurs. Services have a combination of tangible and intangible aspects being offered in the market, for example fruits as a tangible good, and advice as an intangible service. The provision of service is relational: it only exists when two actors agree on the provision of that service. And the usual products being provided as a service are based on behaviours, advice or ideas that are not able to be touched in reality. This situation implies that tracing the origin or production of certain aspects of the services becomes quite difficult. At the same time, there are some tangible aspects in the provision of services, such as the hardware needed to be able to produce digital objects.

When posing open questions during the interviews, the intention was to gather information about those intangible and tangible aspects of the provision of a service. The starting point was the opinion from the side of the migrant entrepreneurs and their reasons behind opening a business in Amsterdam, and also the reasoning behind their choice to implement a business idea. The questions used to gather the qualitative information were:

- What was your main motivation to start your business?
- How did you select the type of business?
- In which geographical area do you usually work?
- How did you choose this area to work?
- Who of the people contributed to any of the following topics?

When measuring novel ideas, the question referred to the degree of innovation being part of their business. During the interviews, the respondents were asked to qualify the level of innovation in their business on a scale or to describe which activities in their business were innovative (OECD / EuroStat, 2005; Smith, 2006). The interviewees were asked to provide a number between 1 and 10 where the smallest value meant no innovation and the highest was total innovation. The average score from the 37 entrepreneurs who gave a response of this question was 7.8, which shows that most of them mentioned that novelty was something

inherent to their services. Then, the complementary questions below were asked, in order to gather the thinking behind the choice for that number in relation to their business ideas:

- Which is the main previous work experience that helps you during your current business?
- Is there any particular skill that is extremely important for your current work? How was the path to proficiency of it?
- Has your company introduced a new good or service in the last year?
- What was your main reason for introducing a new product? Did a particular situation happen to push you to innovate?
- Are there some ideas from your home country that you have replicated or adapted to your business in the Netherlands?
- Do you feel that being a foreigner helps or restricts your business?

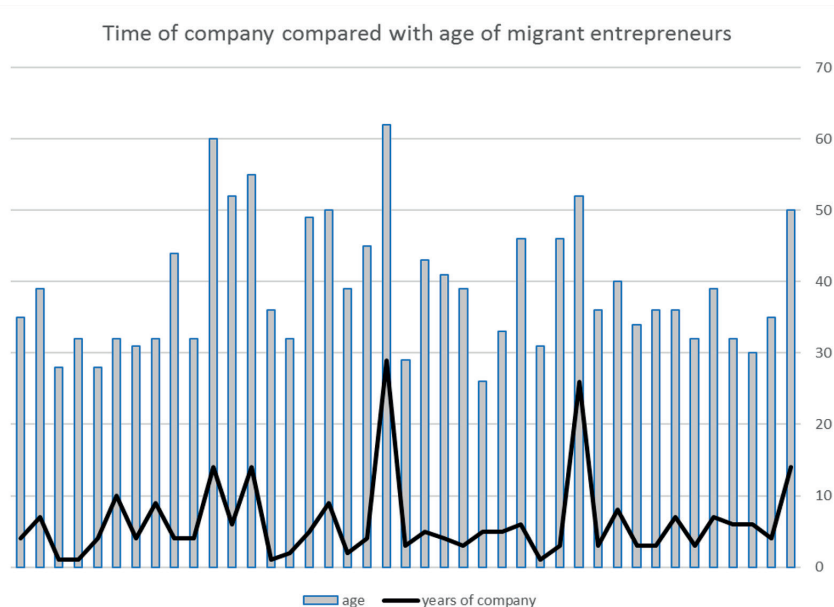


Figure 1 | Amsterdam: migrant entrepreneurs' age and years of having their businesses

The answers were coded in each of the five categories corresponding to the five attributes of innovation. The descriptions of the services were enriched by adding the motivations for choosing those business ideas, the previous life experience of entrepreneurs and in particular the migratory experience. It is important to note that the migratory experience for these entrepreneurs implies that a proportion of their life has been spent in their country of origin or in other locations. Figure 1 provides a graphic representation of the age of the 41 migrant entrepreneurs compared to the years they have run their company in the Netherlands. The average age is 39 years old, while the average time of running their business is 6.3 years. If we subtract an average of years devoted to education (approximately 24 years for a university

degree), then roughly half of the time those entrepreneurs have been economically active corresponds to their business in The Netherlands.

4.2.1 | Validity of the analysis

The analysis performed here is descriptive and corresponds to the information collected with the use of in-depth qualitative interviews. To increase the legitimacy of the answers, there are cross-questions around the same topic. From the questions corresponding to the description and crosscheck of the score of innovation, each of them goes deeper to gather further information around the novelty of their business ideas. The first two questions refer to the topic of previous work experience and the way they see themselves as entrepreneurs using their work experience for their specialty. The third and fourth questions ask the motivation and external situation that contributed to the decision to introduce a novelty, with special attention to the path dependency of their choices applied in their entrepreneurial path. Finally, the fifth and sixth questions go deeper in the influence of their migratory experience in entrepreneurship. Overall, the questions provide details around the topic of innovation and business ideas.

The order that the questions were asked was also important because they were used in various sections of the interview, allowing the respondents to go back to provide further details or to keep building on what they said before (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). The analysis systematizes their answers together as they all relate to the same topic and are used for this chapter. Questioning again and again also helped to reduce the limitations related to the use of language. Language nuances are indeed a limitation because only some of the interviewees had English as their native language. The recurring questioning allowed the respondents to provide answers with much detail and to clarify possible language misinterpretations.

As a researcher, my position in the field is indeed a limitation when organizing the available information. Having the background of the research topics in mind, the selection of the material used could be affected by my own focus (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). The aspect that was most useful to reduce the bias of case selection was the framework of five categories, which allowed the reduction of my personal opinions as the researcher. The process of coding the quotes had to be done once the data of each interview was anonymized, to avoid having a preference for a particular interview. Still, once the codes were grouped by each of the five attributes of innovation, it was inevitable to associate the quote to the corresponding migrant entrepreneur because of the memories when conducting all interviews in Amsterdam myself.

4.3 | WHO ARE MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS AND WHY ARE THEY ACTIVE IN AMSTERDAM?

Looking from the perspective of a migrant entrepreneur in the city of Amsterdam is a way to understand the choices they have made in regard to their business. Those who took part in this research identified that one of the opportunities to provide services in the market is to look at the segment of highly skilled migrant workers, also called by respondents as the *expat community*. Such an expat community has been termed by media articles as a group of white people with privileges (Remarque Koutonin, 2015); or from sociological categories as people with high education, working for multinational companies, originally from Western countries, and with a high socio-economic status (Scott, 2006). This section provides an overview of the use of language since communication and cultural codes is key to understanding the provision of a service; at the same time some key features regarding the type of consumers identified by migrant entrepreneurs is provided.

The migrant entrepreneurs who took part in the interviews have a university level of education and most of them have a few years of extensive experience travelling and living outside their countries of origin. Half of the group comes from a European country, and they were selected to show the situation of those flows of migration that are currently predominant in Amsterdam. Arrivals from European countries have been a majority in recent years (CBS, 2018), and some of them find entrepreneurship as a way to be economically active. The other half of the respondents are from a variety of countries, including the United States of America, the Dominican Republic, Turkey, Israel, Russia, Australia and Venezuela. They represent a group of migrants who came as partners of workers transferred to the Netherlands, or who studied at a Dutch university or who had a private relationship with a Dutch national; in sum, those who had an existing link to the Netherlands when they arrived.

The presence of the *expat community* has a direct effect on the opportunities that entrepreneurs can identify, because the migrants belonging to that group of expats face less discrimination and have a buffer of financial resources (Scott, 2006). The quote below illustrates one of the common views that migrant entrepreneurs have when looking at the presence of *expat* migrants in Amsterdam:

We came to Amsterdam because when we wanted to attract people to Eindhoven, they didn't want to work there. Several people turned down our job offers there. [we came to Amsterdam].. for networking purposes. In Eindhoven, you have the technological infrastructure but the social infrastructure and the recruitment takes place in an international city.

Interview Code 128

The reason to recruit international workers corresponds to a particular urban location. For the case of Amsterdam, there is a long process of attracting people from abroad to work or

study, or for tourism. At the same time, many of the interviewed entrepreneurs consider that the opportunities to provide services in Amsterdam are available because of the presence of potential customers with an international background. These type of customers constitute a niche market where English has become the main business language, as is shown in Table 1 below. Such a decision to use English is not only caused by the presence of other migrants, but actually follows the long tradition of using English in business sectors in the city. These aspects seem to be continuously feeding each other, causing a more frequent use of English to become attractive for foreigners who expand the use of that language and so forth. It is uncertain to what extent English is growing in all sectors of the Amsterdam economy, but it is clear that the segment of services provided in that language have become quite relevant. Domains that still use Dutch are those involving legal aspects, negotiations or bureaucratic procedures with authorities.

Table 1 | Frequencies of the use of languages for business

Languages	Frequencies
English	5
English and Dutch	7
English, Dutch and others	20
English and others	9
Total	41

The city of Amsterdam, as an urban space, has accepted English as one of the main languages to be addressed with foreigners wanting to move to the city, but also other languages being used in smaller niches. The situation is very visible with the welcoming of tourists, as shown by all the tourist websites and tourist information. At the bureaucratic level, the website of the municipality of Amsterdam offers English information about housing, taxes, registration, leisure activities, work opportunities, study choices, and much more. Specifically, in the area of business, the Chamber of Commerce offers a detailed guide in English about the procedures for starting a business (Hawes et al., 2017). Also, the tax authorities provide information on their website to answer questions from migrant entrepreneurs about the existing rules; a phone call to ask for more information can also be done with specific agents on the line who speak English. The role of English and Dutch seems to fit the image of Amsterdam as an internationally oriented business city. And yet, the importance of other languages also plays a remarkable role. Entrepreneurs mentioned that it is easier for their clients to express themselves better in their native languages; thus providing services in native languages proves to be an advantage over competitors. The lack of proficiency in Dutch or sometimes even in English opens the opportunities for services to be provided in other languages, as shown in the following quote:

I speak all three [referring to English, Dutch and mother tongue]. I have tourists from [entrepreneur's own country]. I freelance for a Dutch company owned by foreigners. With my partner we speak Dutch and sometimes English. (...) I think if I would feel confident in Dutch, my business would benefit because some Dutch do not want to work in English. (...) they worked with me and then they stopped.

Interview code 135

More languages become smaller niches where other migrants could be the customers for services. The case above shows one of the type of consumers that migrant entrepreneurs are targeting: other internationals. Having a larger presence of migrants from different countries expands the possibilities for offering them a service, and at the same time it encourages the adaptation of those services to the demands of those customers – providing a beauty treatment with at least the standards that the customer is used to in the country of origin, for example, or providing legal advice that is suitable for the particular case of being a foreigner in the Netherlands.

To close this section, the migrant entrepreneurs interviewed in Amsterdam share many common aspects with the rest of current migration flows into the city, but nonetheless their choice for starting a business crosses the boundaries of nationality and language. In a city where people from various countries and cultural backgrounds interact, the opportunities for business need to stand out from the competition. With that context in mind, the following section goes deeper into the five attributes of innovation that make them stand out.

4

4.4 | ATTRIBUTES OF INNOVATION

Experiences are accumulated when a person goes through a process of migration, from memories from the country of origin, from the process of moving, and from the country of destination. Each migratory episode contributes to create a larger pool of experiences. While some of those experiences become practices in the daily life of the migrant, others turn into business ideas for entrepreneurship. The choice of a business idea is inevitably influenced by the entrepreneur's previous life experiences. In this section, a description of those ideas is linked to each of the five attributes of innovation; because some ideas that did not exist in the country of destination could be carried and adapted by migrants themselves. Business ideas illustrate the arguments and those descriptions were taken during the interviews, but do not contain a reference to the code of the interview for anonymity purposes, since nationalities and other details are used.

4.4.1 | Relative advantage

The first attribute is the relative advantage compared to the product that the innovation is trying to replace or improve. In the case of services, the novelty could refer to the technique employed, to the tools used or to the mode provided. From the initiatives of the migrant entrepreneurs interviewed, the introduction of cultural traits is predominant in all the cases. Quotes below exemplify the way that elements from the entrepreneurs' own cultural identities are mentioned by entrepreneurs themselves when providing their services.

Dances from India are adjusting techniques appropriate for Dutch students (self-score of 9)

Visual container working as a digital platform to make people work together and help small businesses is reinforcing Italian roots with the long tradition in design (self-score of 7)

Treatment of patients is using networking and socializing because taking the initiative is an American approach (self-score of 10)

Lessons of Business English are using an approach to talk to anyone in a way that uses Scottish stubbornness (self-score of 6)

Migrant entrepreneurs use those generalizations about nationalities to reinforce stereotypes or to introduce new ideas about their country of origin. The descriptions above show three facets that increase their relative advantage. The first one is the generic base that the service uses to provide further qualities to improve or specialize them. Dances, language lessons, digital platforms and health treatments are not new in the market of Amsterdam – competitors are able to provide them in a similar manner. The differentiation is the second facet: novel elements are included in those services to gain an advantage over the competition. The use of their own cultural traits is evident in the cases described above, and this is the same way that entrepreneurs are advertising their services on the market. The personification of those cultural traits includes the valorisation of the services they offer, for example the inimitability of the Indian influence, the legacy of the Italian heritage, the effectiveness of the American networking or the approach of the Scottish personality. The third facet is the defence of the spaces created in those niche markets, because using those cultural traits enables those entrepreneurs – and others with a similar background – to profit from that niche. Entrepreneurs oriented to the local Dutch-speaking market do not compete at the same level as migrant entrepreneurs because the former lack the cultural authenticity to offer certain services, though such circumstances change over time when the novelty is incorporated in the mainstream market.

The relative advantage is composed by a combination of contextual factors with the personal input of the entrepreneur, thus cannot be used in the same way if the context changes, e.g. another country of migration, or if the entrepreneurs decide to modify the quality of that service.

4.4.2 | Compatibility

The second attribute is the compatibility of the innovation with existing traditions in the society. The path-dependence in the provision of services facilitates the acceptance by the average customer. Also, the identification of specific needs from the customers allow entrepreneurs to provide that specific service to make clients' lives easier. The cases below illustrate the manner that migrant entrepreneurs use their migratory experience to identify with existing needs in the market.

Digital photography management and pre-production: replication of photography styles (self-score of 9)

Front-end web development: Russian clients in the beginning and expanded with the Russian trait of concluding business with a drink (self-score of 8)

Personal Style Coach: wanted to be mobile and work by allowing women to be at their home and provide them with better time management (self-score of 10)

4

With the first quote about a business in photography, the use of digital service go in line with the needs that this entrepreneur identified in his customers: working remotely and getting their picture digitally. Such form of providing the service is compatible to the forms of providing a similar service by other entrepreneurs in the market, and with the use of technology for personal and business purposes. Thus the service is compatible, even replicative, and the entrepreneur gains by being able to provide a service at a similar standard to what the customer could find elsewhere. For the second case of web development, the entrepreneur realized that co-ethnics required the design and maintenance of websites where the use of Cyrillic alphabet, construction of the design and attractiveness were important bonding factors. Then, he also realized that the tradition of *borrel*³ – informal, social events with alcoholic drinks – was similar to the way he was making business deals in Russia. Closing deals with such a style became a way to approach Dutch companies using the trait of his country of origin but having a safety net of Russian customers that were already working with him. Finally, the third case uses her own situation of being mobile and provides online advice to other women about their personal style in clothing and time management. It is compatible with a lifestyle that her customers follow and she is available to coach them in different time zones. Such a service appeals to women who are going through a migratory process or have a mobile business work rhythm with many trips, thus need an online coach using digital communication technology.

Comparing the compatibility to the existing customers, a change of preferences could be crucial in determining the success or failure of something novel in the market. It is common to hear entrepreneurs say that they were ahead of their time with some of their ideas, and that those ideas did not work at that time, but someone else made them a success years later.

³ To clarify this term, the following site in Dutch provide various definitions: <https://www.encyclo.nl/begrip/borrel>

4.4.3 | Complexity

The third attribute is the complexity: the difficulty of understanding how to use an innovation. Though high complexity allows a monopoly in the provision of a service to be maintained, it also narrows down the market to those experts in the topic. One strategy is to allow potential users to be somehow familiar with the main use of that service, but having a larger pool of know-how in the back in case of need. The migrant entrepreneurs selected to illustrate this attribute show the use of specific knowledge of the service being translated to the needs of their clients, with emphasis on the knowledge acquired in their country of origin or in previous migratory experiences.

Bike design experience in the US and the Netherlands used to face the situation of Dutch companies who refused to change their bike design to export (self-score of 10)

Music lessons and composing learnt in Israel from a French teacher, then adapting his teaching techniques in the UK and updating his knowledge of the terminology and the distance of notes for better compositions (self-score not mentioned)

Marketing and web design used to advertise the capacity of companies to sell in the US market (self-score of 8)

The first case constitutes a unique case of identifying opportunities that entrepreneurs operating for a long time in that well-established market have not seen. The migrant entrepreneur applied the design skills learned abroad, learned about the industry of Dutch bikes and created new bikes for the international market, but still profited from the position of being under the umbrella of the Dutch bike industry. A complex industrial process led to a very usable and tangible product; research and tests constituted the background to offer a bicycle adapted to the needs of the customers abroad. The second case illustrates a creative entrepreneurship idea based on music influences from several countries. The entrepreneur uses the capacity to adapt the services to customers who use other terminologies and have different musical traditions, thanks to the experiences learned from migrants as musical teachers in the country of origin. Unique knowledge of music is required to create novel music creations; while at the same time musicians must adapt to different musical niches with other foreigners living in the same city. The third case illustrates the use of digital technology and specialized techniques to approach a market located in the country of origin. The service provides training, coaching and techniques to achieve the style that US customers are used to. The entrepreneur uses a complex understanding of American behaviour to provide a simple, but effective, service to provide access using appropriate marketing strategies for market segments of the US.

The migratory experience becomes an advantage for these entrepreneurs because they are able to simplify complex processes in the production of goods, music or marketing campaigns. Their expertise is seen as a simple step of translating between the needs of each geographical location, and that makes their business attractive to their customers.

4.4.4 | Trialability

The fourth attribute is the trialability, in other words the actual possibility that a person uses the innovation. The possibility of using a service implies customization to the needs of each customer, but of course such a process takes more effort than providing a standardized one-size-fits-all service. In the four cases selected below, it is evident that migrant entrepreneurs use their personality to provide a service with a different style, and they stress the possibility of the customers trying out their style.

Coach on interculturality who works with the people factor: activities are tailored and the core is group harmony (self-score of 4)

Motor skills for children: ingredients for food workshops adapted to the Netherlands using Asian shops (self-score of 10)

Tax advisors: better storytelling and skilled in writing than competition (self-score of 6)

Walking psychological therapy: accommodate customer service and focus on lowering barriers to start therapy (self-score of 8)

4

All four cases share a common characteristic: they are focused on delivering a pleasant experience when customers receive the service. That situation of providing a service with their personal style is connected with their migratory process, because entrepreneurs can make that difference in styles that are available in different geographical contexts where they have migrated. These group of entrepreneurs introduced small changes in the way the service is provided and at the same time find a way to connect personally with the customer.

The first case uses the entrepreneur's personal situation of being a migrant to help people connect across spheres with different cultural practices. The goal is to find collective wellbeing while profiting from a personal coaching process. The entrepreneur's qualities are used as the novelty in that segment market of coaching, and customers relate to and use those experiences to change their own behaviour. The second case consists of increasing the motor skills of children by letting them playing with food. The novelty is the combination of techniques learnt previously in another country with products available in that region and then adapted with foreign-origin products found in Amsterdam. The third case is a tax advisor, and the procedures to be followed are standardized. But, the advantage of telling and writing stories appealing to the customers who are also migrants is the key to advertising the business as experts in dealing with taxes for foreigners in the Netherlands. Such an approach is new to the sector and is an important factor to get closer to migrants, as their target customer. Finally, the last case is psychological counselling which is accessible to many people. The style of making it attractive for people who spend long hours sitting is to include movement and walking as part of the therapy, and also the use of English language for migrants. Turning a traditional psychological meeting into an active talk is new, because it allows customers to receive mental therapy while enjoying walks around a new city.

The possibility for customers to try small changes in the way that a service is provided goes in line with the intention to position those companies as the expert in those segments of the market. By making small adaptations, migrant entrepreneurs show that there are specific needs of a group of customers, and this could be the beginning of diffusion to a larger group of customers.

4.4.5 | Observability

The fifth attribute is the observability of the results from other actors of the group. (Potential) customers are not only those who need to observe those novelties but also the competition. The way to achieve more visibility is usually marketing, so the cases selected include marketing strategies or organizational changes in the companies to fulfil the needs of their customers. But making the business of migrants publicly visible is related to the acceptance of the local society to their presence (Kuppinger, 2014), as the public can react on different scales, from embracement to rejection.

Bike repair service: open 7 days a week with long opening hours to repair bikes on the spot (self-score of 8)

Language school sells France but only image-wise (self-score of 8)

Career Coach: use of the right words as a native English speaker to prepare CVs, interviews and coaching at an international level (self-score of 7)

Co-working space and English-based women Network of Entrepreneurs: able to understand how other internationals feel, empathy and bring positive sharing practices (self-score of 6)

The four cases include changes in the marketing strategies and the organisational structures to be able to deliver a novel service. All those changes are visible for other potential customers as well as for the competition. The first case tackles the problem of a broken bicycle. The service of the migrant business is able to use digital channels of communication and on-the-spot repairs to satisfy clients at any time of the day. Their marketing does not include any reference to the nationality or background of the owners, and it makes a call for local customers to use their services. The second case uses the image of French stereotypes to deliver language courses and other activities in French. Their uniqueness is the use of that language in other activities outside the classroom, for example cooking lessons or acting in a play. It also suggests that their staff are capable of using French for many activities, implying the characteristic that their teachers are all foreigners. And it also expands the capacity to teach another language from a classroom to other physical settings where activities can take place, such as restaurants, theatres or on the street. The entrepreneur in the third case uses the expertise of having worked previously in London to train professionals who aim for an international career. The training can be given in different time zones and with the use of digital channels of communication, eliminating the typical office hours of career consultants working in a company. The fourth case uses the

co-working model as the core of the business, but the novelty is the focus of such a space to strengthen the support among women entrepreneurs, with special attention on foreigners starting as freelancers. Such a model to support each other in their professional and personal activities targets a limited type of customer but with a longer retention period.

The visibility of those businesses allows them to attract the target customer they are looking for, and having an international city like Amsterdam as a background allows them to operate without limitations to the stereotypes applied to them. The consolidation of their target customers is also a strategy to differentiate themselves from the competition.

4.5 | THE ADAPTATION OF THE IDEAS INTO BUSINESSES

From the previous section, the services that migrant entrepreneurs have available in the market were categorized in different attributes of innovation. There are business ideas that make use of one of those attributes, while others combine two or three of them; but none of the interviewed cases uses all five to stand out. A reason for that is the risk of building a totally innovative business because the market needs to be created. A ground-breaking innovation builds a niche market from the beginning, and this situation requires effort over time and a suitable context (Rogers, 2015). A message from the respondents constitutes their capacity to adapt by adding something new to an existing service that is needed in the market. Entrepreneurs were able to identify opportunities in the niche of the expat community and they built their business ideas around that, using their previous experience as the base. To look in more detail at the adaptation processes, this section uses cases from the interviews to explain three different aspects when adapting: what already existed, what could be new and what could be barriers.

These selected cases are based in the urban location of Amsterdam where the migrants started their businesses, and their customers are also living in the same geographical region. The response of the potential customers is one of the most important for the survival of the business, but of course the institutional conditions cannot be ignored. Some thoughts of the migrant entrepreneurs are compiled below to illustrate the need to adapt. Some of those conditions will be explored from a systematic analysis in Chapter 5, thus this provides a bridge between the chapters.

- European people told me what they need so I adapted and was not afraid to try something
- It's better to be from C [entrepreneur's country of origin], as people are then interested in international business with me. But it's bad when there are letters from the tax authority [Belastingdienst] that I do not understand.
- It's easy here [in Amsterdam] to feel at home, A's [entrepreneur's nationality] line of thought is to think out of the box [referring to that same quality existing in Amsterdam]

The answers from the entrepreneurs show that changes were necessary to steer the services in the right direction to attract the customers they needed. There is a combination between the individual agency and the contextual reaction, as can be seen from the first case where the changes are given by people in the entrepreneur's social circle and are also motivated by the initiative of the entrepreneur. A remarkable aspect is the identification of that circle of friends as Europeans who give advice about the need to adapt to the Dutch market; a deeper analysis of the people surrounding the entrepreneurs is given in Chapter 6. The second case shows the role of complying with regular formalities to operate in the local market, and the consequence of the omission or lack of languages. To '*understand the culture, government procedures and legal [setting]*' (Interview code 111) is crucial to operate in the niche market where the entrepreneur is located, and in addition to know which tricks can be done from within the system is something that migrants learn over time. The third case illustrates the similarities in the conditions between two countries, and using those as markers to feel more at ease. At the same time, having some similar markers goes hand in hand with being different and people promoting themselves as entrepreneurs: '*you have to work a bit more to prove yourself in Dutch society*' (interview code 118). Another aspect about the process of adaptation of something new in the market is that novelties also face changes in external conditions. Arriving to live in a new place implies a change in pattern in the daily life of migrants, and the search for safe spaces also applies to business initiatives. The descriptions below show a summary of the thoughts of migrant entrepreneurs about recent changes in Amsterdam:

- About the use the niche of international customers and international diversity: there is a big expat community with opportunities in the expat niche
- About the advantage of having a focus on international markets: business ideas are looked at from a different perspective and things are not taken for granted
- About the reaction of other people: It is positive to build relations with like-minded people, especially when international clients are available who speak English

The presence of such a large international group of people goes in line with the expansion of services that are being demanded at personal and corporate levels. The aim of companies based in the Netherlands to grow internationally has opened positions for foreigners and makes their presence more visible in the city. In this scenario, entrepreneurs, whether they are migrants or not, search for similar people to start a business with or who can be supportive in that process. The presence of an international market *helps to enter the entrepreneurial network* (Interview Code 113) that exists in the city and keeps growing to reach different segments of the market. The creation of niche markets for these type of consumers is recognized first by those who are part of those groups and those who realize that there are opportunities to create services for the needs of newly arrived migrants. Other types of migrants have experienced a similar process where the needs are identified from within and are met by entrepreneurs with their same ethnic origin (Logan et al., 2002).

The last aspect of this section refers to the barriers identified by migrant entrepreneurs when trying to introduce new services or to adapt existing services. It is evident that novel ideas can find obstacles in the market when the customers do not consume those services, but in fact, the reasons behind that lack of consumption are social factors where consumers reject those novel ideas. Two main barriers were recurrent during the conversation with the respondents: one of them had to do with language misunderstanding, and the other with clashes in traditions and social habits. The cases below illustrate these barriers in relation to novel ideas in the market:

- Language barrier as double-edged situation: it can be a fresh start to choose how to act, but also it can be a vulnerability and limit because it reduces the number of clients
- The Dutch can be rude, and habits in the Netherlands are difficult to change
- Dutch businesses want to do business with other Dutch people

Regarding language, the first statement is a good explanation of the role of language. It was explained before that language offers various business opportunities, and at the same time the number of customers in that language remains a limitation for the business to grow to more potential customers. In such a context, the growth inevitably points to expansion to the Dutch-speaking market as an opportunity to show them their services. But not all migrant entrepreneurs aim to grow – they prefer to remain in their secure niche where they feel at ease. Migrant entrepreneurs have noticed that business with Dutch entrepreneurs, and sometimes customers, can be difficult and that certain habits are difficult to understand and overcome, as can be read in the second and third statements. More research in a longitudinal aspect is needed to find out the motivations and reasons for Dutch entrepreneurs to collaborate with migrant entrepreneurs.

4

4.6 | CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I used the theoretical framework of the attributes of innovations to describe the business ideas offered by migrant entrepreneurs. This framework is the first building block to explore innovations by looking at the features of a product as a starting point, whether it is a product, a good or a service. The specialization in the service sector implies that many of those products have an intangible feature and are difficult to measure with the existing methods to measure innovation (OECD / EuroStat, 2005; Smith, 2006). A novelty, as described by entrepreneurs, is constructed with experiences of having previously lived in another country and with the familiarity of having migrated themselves. The urban location of Amsterdam becomes a suitable place to look at the entrepreneurship initiatives of migrants.

The data, extracted from 41 in-depth interviews, illustrates the argument that innovation is a category with various facets that can have a tangible and intangible nature. The businesses that took part in the interviews were established in recent years and are in the process of being

consolidated in the local market. Using the five attributes of innovation, this chapter further explored the opportunities and limitations for novel business ideas to enter a market. Relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability were used as categories to understand the position of a novelty in relation to the market and the society in general. Each of those business uses one of those attributes or a combination of a couple of them, so the innovation is indeed a combination of known and unknown features for that target market.

When referring to the intangible aspects of innovation, the results show two concepts that are relevant for services provided by migrants –cultural adaptation and language situation– which have been overlooked by literature focusing on technology or scientific outcomes when studying innovation. Cultural differences are an important aspect to consider when measuring and studying innovation in business. The style with which a service is provided is as important for a customer as the service itself. The novel service is complemented with the use of cultural adaptation as part of the social structure where innovation takes place, as suggested by Rogers (2004).

The tangible aspects of the innovation were occasionally mentioned during the interviews as being something novel in the market. Goods are not the core of the businesses that took part in this study, but instead used as accessories for the entrepreneurs to provide their service. Aspects such as the use of technological equipment, cosmetics, books etc. are highlighted as being part of a package to enable the entrepreneurs to do activities with individual or corporate customers. Nonetheless, the use of goods acquires new meanings while the entrepreneurs use them for their business purposes; one example is the use of food for child development.

The results show the different attributes of the novelties being included in the process of fitting the service particularly to each client. The use of cultural traits from their country of origin becomes an integral part of the service they are offering, with a gradual adaptation of those traits to an international type of customer who is part of the *expat community*. Expanding to the mainstream market with Dutch customers is a process that could be followed over the years, and a path that some of the interviewees are already following.

In the search for business ideas and novelties, the role of previous education, training and work experience seems to be important for immigrant entrepreneurs to differentiate themselves from competitors (Nathan, 2015). All of them use their previous studies to provide specialized services that are backed up by their educational credentials. In the particular niche that entrepreneurs refer to as *expat* customers, the provision of services to other –high-class– immigrants needs to show an image of international validity and expertise being applied locally.

The methodology could be replicated in the study of services in other national or local scenarios. The five attributes could have more accurate indicators to measure them in relation to those scenarios, to go beyond the exploratory style of this study with in-depth interpretations. More research in this area could help to establish more accurate methods to measure novelties while at the same time reaching a larger number of cases to conduct more representative sampling. The interview guides as well as the organisation and analysis of data have been developed and could easily be accommodated for further contexts.

The results from further research could have a different lens to look at innovation from migrant groups who are from a particular country of origin or who are working in a particular sector of the economy. Knowing that the characteristics of migration are diverse, further studies could take into account those aspects. Additionally, the importance of the migratory experiences in the introduction of novel business ideas provides fertile ground to turn stories into business ideas. And because migratory experiences are usually depicted to have a variety of reasons, then entrepreneurship and innovation becomes a path to apply those experiences.

CHAPTER 5

Context for the entrepreneurial activities of migrants⁴

⁴ An early draft version of this chapter was presented in June 2016 at the Conference of the 30th Anniversary of MIGRINTER in Poitiers, France.

5.1 | INTRODUCTION

Cristina is an entrepreneur in Brescia, Italy. She was born in Bucharest, Romania and lived there for 34 years. She completed her studies in aesthetics and worked in this area for several years. In 2004, she migrated to a small town in the province of Brescia in northern Italy. Her reason was to look for a job, and her big desire to continue working in her area of expertise resulted in opening her own beauty salon. Later, in 2013, she moved to the city of Brescia and found an affordable location for her new salon. She worked alone, offering skin treatments, manicures, laser depilation, pedicures and a solarium. A small loan from a bank helped her to buy the necessary equipment. She hired a tax advisor-accountant and a business advisor to take care of specific tasks for her company, like bureaucratic paperwork and tax declaration. She was aware of the tough competition in her area, as well as the importance of standing out from the rest. She says she is giving a life experience to her clients that is not available anywhere else in Italy because of her introduction and use of Gerovital cosmetics in her treatments. This beauty product was developed in Romania in the 1950s and was famous among European and American celebrities during the following decades because of its claim to prevent the aging process and revitalize the skin. Cristina made efforts to make her business known in the city using her website and word-of-mouth. She decided that communication through WhatsApp was also crucial to arrange appointment with clients. For the future, she thought that her business activities would remain the same and she did not have plans to expand.

Interview Code 291

In the case described above, two points seem important for Cristina: the competition from other companies in Brescia, and the people who influenced her business in various aspects. Cristina stated that she faced tough competition from other businesses that provide a similar service to hers. So, she needed to stand out from the rest and used her previous training and experience to introduce a product not available in the area. At the same time, she realized that her expertise has limits and she needed to hire other people to do specific tasks for her business, such as accounting and management.

In a similar manner, there are other entrepreneurs who use their (migrant) experience to bring something new to the markets in the societies where they live. Such a situation brings us to the two main aspects that will be dealt with in this chapter based on the case of migrant entrepreneurs in Brescia: the way that migrants make use of their individual characteristics to fit in that context.

It is possible to look at various factors that facilitate or constrain the introduction of something different to the urban space of Brescia. The local market in this urban space is the scenario where the activities of migrant entrepreneurs are explored. In the local media, products and practices of migrants are commonly qualified as being ethnic (Galesi, 2017), in a way to portray them as something different to the regular offer from the other Italian companies. With that idea in

mind, it is unclear whether migrant entrepreneurs are focusing only in the weak ethnic market of the city, or also targeting (innovative) services for the mainstream customer.

This study is one of the few to look at this city as a case to explore the link of migrants with urban economies. In the topic of innovation and industrial complexes or small and medium sized companies (SMEs), the cases of Turin and Reggio Emilia in northern Italy have been reference points (Antonioli et al., 2009; Signoretti, 2016). However, little has been done to explore other regions and cities where there is a presence of migrant companies. The quote above illustrates the fact that smaller cities like Brescia could be a magnet with affordable places for migrant entrepreneurs to start their businesses. At the same time, smaller cities could allow a smoother interaction with other actors who could support the business initiatives of migrants, as the case of Cristina shows us, where she gets help from other professionals to handle the company.

To explore further the existence, or not, of new ideas among migrant services in Brescia, this chapter explores the third research question of the study. I make use of the theoretical building blocks to get a better understanding of the relationship between the individual characteristics of the migrant entrepreneurs and the urban context in which they do business. The research question guiding this chapter refers to the interaction of entrepreneurs with the local context:

- iii) What is the institutional and social context providing a local opportunity structure to promote or inhibit innovation among migrant entrepreneurs? With this question, the external conditions are taken into account as important factors that entrepreneurs need to live through.

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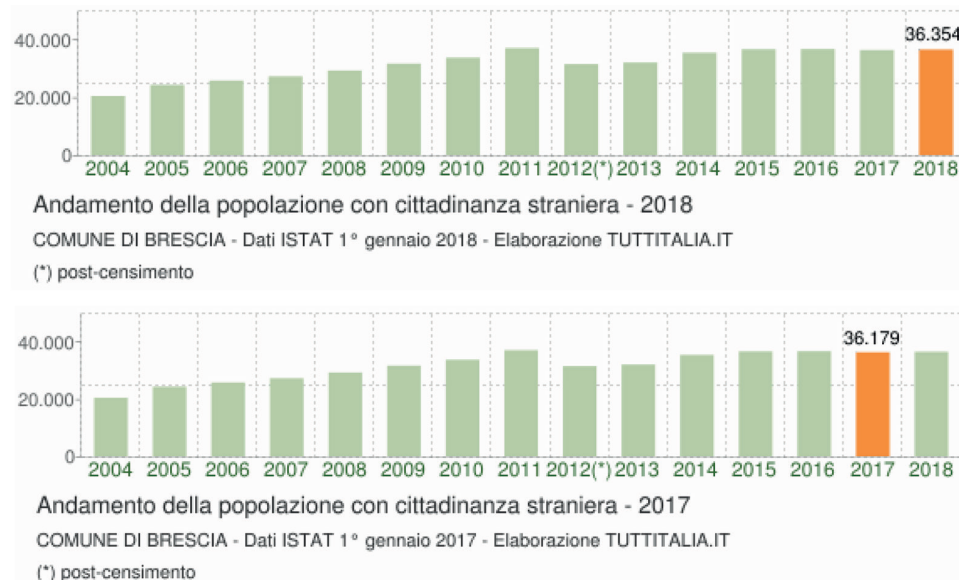


Figure 2 | Changes in the number of foreigners in Brescia 2017–2018. Source: Tuttitalia.it with ISTAT data

The presence of migrants in Brescia has been followed in the spotlight for several years. In 2009, a report from ISTAT mentioned that Brescia, together with Prato, were the provinces with the highest percentage of migrants in comparison with their local Italian population (ISTAT, 2009). They mentioned that around 12% of people living in those provinces was a foreigner. Approximately ten years later, the percentage increased to around 18%, as can be seen in Figure 2.

In 2009, the concentration of migrants did not happen in big urban spaces as in other countries, but rather in rural areas and small cities. Regions of Brescia, like Castelvotati, Rovato, or regions in Lombardy, like Verdelino or Rovato, had a presence of foreigners between 20% and 25% of the total population. Romanians were stated to be the biggest migrant group present in Lombardy In 2009, followed by Moroccans and Albanians. In 2017 and 2018, information about Brescia shows Romanians again as the main group followed by Pakistanis and Ukrainians (TuttlItalia, 2018).

The latest available information shows that regions in the north of Italy are still attractive places for migrants to settle. Over time, migrants have found work opportunities and a more visible presence in the region In that scenario, this research explores the position of migrant entrepreneurs in the urban space of Brescia. From observations in the city centre, migrant groups were usually formed by men gathering in nearby shops. Such a situation allowed the observer to cluster them as being part of similar ethnic groups, as they shared similar clothing, spoke the same language and acted in parallel manners. At weekends, the presence of children and women increased on the streets, with the Saturday market in the main shopping area. The varieties of languages spoken seemed to get bigger, as well as the amount of trading from vendors who have an Asian appearance and speak Italian with a foreign accent. These migrants engage less in industrial activities than their counterparts in rural areas, for example the case of Prato, and this is why the sector of services is taken as the point of departure. Figure 3 provides a summary of the interviews in Brescia conducted for this research.

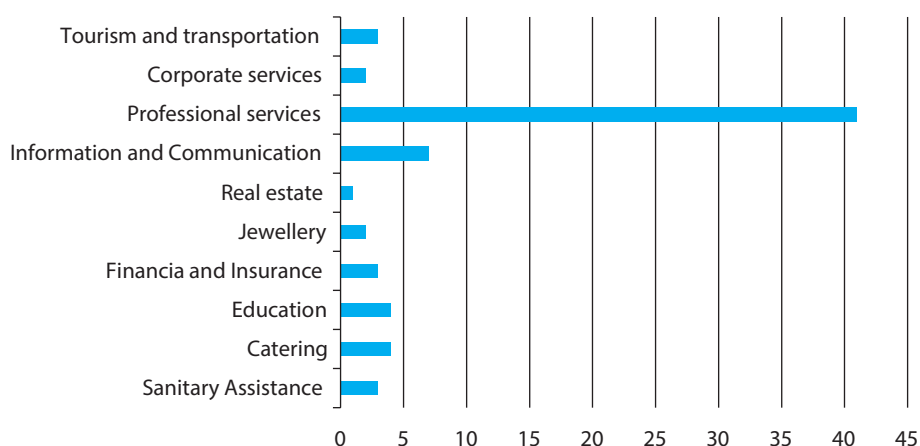


Figure 3 | Interviews of migrant entrepreneurs in Brescia by economic sectors

The sector that most migrant entrepreneurs chose to best describe their activities was *Professional Services*, which includes many activities offered to individual clients such as hairdressing, cleaning and repair of clothes and shoes, wellness and beauty, and translation. The category of *information and communication* corresponds to businesses providing postal services, internet cafes, fax and telephone service points, and website creation. The category of *education* refers to language schools and extra-curricular activities for schoolchildren. *Catering* services deliver goods from restaurants or from food shops. *Tourism & transportation* are travel agents, tour providers or transportation of goods. *Support to companies* includes the installation of infrastructure for offices. *Sanitary assistance* refers to medical treatments outside the public system, such as physiotherapy or psychological support.

The search for new products is stimulated by the trade in the streets of Brescia, where Italians and foreigners gather. Tangible products with an ethnic background, such as clothing, food or handicrafts are displayed in public spaces and competing for a client who may or may not be familiar with them. Intangible products are advertised as an immersion into a cultural practice, or an experience with the way of doing things in other countries. In that location, the interviews conducted also asked about the motivations for starting a business in Brescia, and how migrants decide which businesses to start. Table 2 and Table 3 show a summary of the answers. Some answers seem to be very particular to migrants, such as the motivation to show how things are done in the country of origin or the work experience in other countries. Also in the selection of business, it is relevant that migrants see opportunities for business because they can offer something that the market does not have.

Table 2 | Motivations of migrant entrepreneurs in Brescia

Aim to show how things are done in his/her country
Passion of doing what he/she likes
To become independent
Family business
Previous work experience in another country
Took it over from the previous boss
Need to work for the family
There were no job vacancies in the area
He/she studied to do that

Table 3 | Reasons of migrant entrepreneurs to select a business in Brescia

Previous experience as an employee or as entrepreneur.
He/she liked to do that activity and starting his/her own company was the way to keep doing it.
The Italian market did not have what he/she offers.
There were no/few competitors in that neighbourhood.

5.1.1 | Structure of the chapter

Interviews with migrant entrepreneurs were collected to understand the situation of their businesses in terms of their service, their novel ideas, their contact with external parties and their migratory history. A list, with micro and small business as well as solo businesses, was provided by the Chamber of Commerce of Brescia and used to identify companies in the service sector with migrant owners. Section 5.2 explains the methods used for the analysis of the available information.

In section 5.3, the collected information of migrant entrepreneurs is referenced in line with the contextual characteristics of Brescia. I consider the existing institutional infrastructure in the city, the way that entrepreneurs have used it and the openings with the national Italian agenda for innovation. Social aspects are intertwined with the economic situation when looking at migrant business in their neighbourhoods, among ethnic groups and in the region; in addition, I add a layer of social contacts in the digital space. Economic aspects are also mentioned: the growth of the economy in the past years according to official statistics in connection with the situation of the interviewed migrant businesses. The geographical differences provide a picture of the areas where these migrant entrepreneurs operate, which is related to their capacity, to the selection of customers and the opportunities for innovation in smaller or bigger markets.

Following that analysis of the contextual conditions for innovation, I provide a description of the individual characteristics of migrant entrepreneurs. Human, social and financial capital, as suggested by Aldrich (2005), are used to explain the formation of the relations with those social contacts. Earlier research showed that the individual capacities of migrant entrepreneurs are matched with the type of business they operate in a urban space (Marchand & Siegel, 2014): for some it can be an advantage while for others not.

Finally, in section 5.4, the discussion is based on the opportunities that migrant entrepreneurs have found (or not) for the introduction of new ideas. The findings are connected to earlier research to show the similarities and differences with other cases. The choice of novel or replicative business ideas is explained through the action of the migrant entrepreneurs in the urban space of Brescia.

5.2 | METHODS OF ANALYSIS

The material from the interviews consists of 70 migrant entrepreneurs working in the service sector of Brescia, Italy. The process of data collection was explained in Chapter 3, dealing with the methodology of this study, but I will repeat the main details in the following paragraphs. Overall, the format of the material used for this chapter captured three main aspects of migrant businesses: one, the services and products offered in relation to the local market; and two, the characteristics of the owner and personnel working in the company; and three, the entrepreneurial motivation and future prospective for the business . Since the core of this study is to look at migrant entrepreneurs, the information on the migratory history comes from a special section in the interview guide where the emphasis was on collecting interviewees'

education and work experience in another country to look for past sources of ideas for their current companies.

To analyse the contextual aspect in which the entrepreneurs act, the institutional, social and economic situation of Brescia is looked at. Two main sources form the core of the information for the context of Brescia: desk research of different websites, looking at policy briefs, projects and ideas related to innovation; and the section coded I_F from the interviews from migrant entrepreneurs. The documents collected provided crucial information to frame the context of Brescia in the past years and in the present. The main source of those documents were public institutions, such as the Italian National Statistic Office – ISTAT (<https://istat.it/en/>), the Chamber of Commerce of Brescia (<http://bs.camcom.it>), the section for companies of the municipal office of Brescia (<http://cit.provincia.brescia.it/>), and the section of Innovation and Technology of the provincial government (<http://cit.provincia.brescia.it/>).

The institutional side of the context is guided by the existing policies of public institutions. Policy advice and main guidelines are found at the national and regional level while projects are implemented at a provincial and city level. Such information gives an overview of the trends orchestrated by the state. The social situation is surmised from the annual reports of the situation of migrants in different regions inside Lombardy (Cesareo, 2016, 2017, 2018) and illustrated with selected media articles. Finally, the economic situation is given by the reports of the Chamber of Commerce of Brescia focused on the situation of the city and the situation of companies with foreign-born owners (IRS, 2017; Lucarno, 2010).

The geographical levels of entrepreneurship compiles information from the interviews about the location of the migrant businesses. Questions I_A7 and I_A9 provide information about the location where their main economic activity takes place and if there are branches in other places. This information is complemented with the reasons that led those migrants to choose those locations, which is found in questions I_B6 to I_B10.

To explain the ways that entrepreneurs use their human, social and financial capital in relation to their novel/replicative business ideas, I make use of the qualitative description of the case. The variable of novel/replicative ideas was constructed with the question of self-assessment (I_A5) on a scale from “1-No innovation at all” to “5-all our activities are innovative”. This question is used by the Community Innovation Survey (OECD / EuroStat, 2005) and provides an initial indication of the presence of innovation in each company. For all the cases, the questions where respondents were asked about the description of the services was used to validate the self-declared scale; for example, an unclear, vague or absence of description of the service invalidated the scale and was assigned scale 1, while an accurate description of the service or the technology used validated it. Figure 4 with its attached table summarizes the amount of respondents for each level of service according to the interviews from migrant entrepreneurs.

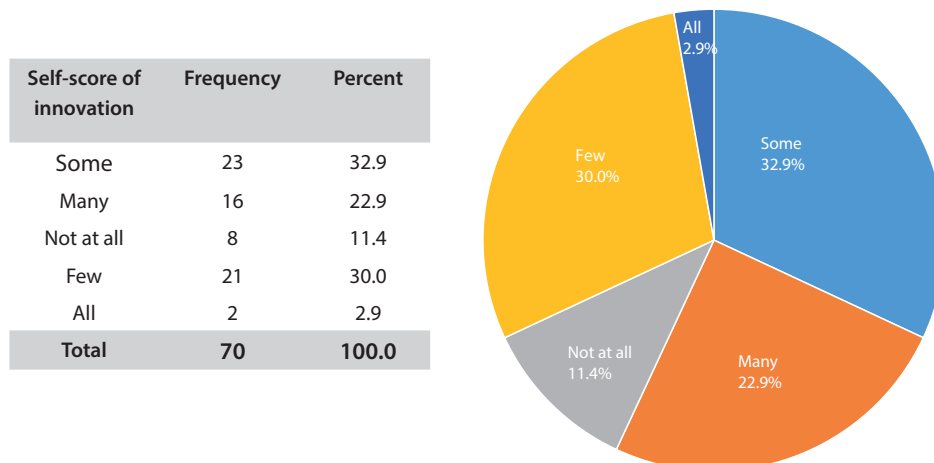


Figure 4 | Frequencies of the responses about the self-assessment of innovation

The section of the empirical material is based on the three aspects, as suggested by Aldrich (Aldrich, 2005): the human, social and financial capital of migrant entrepreneurs. For the human capital, the answers related to the professional and educational experiences of migrants are used. Financial capital uses the information provided about self-funding, and access to credit or personal loans. Social capital looks at the business contacts supporting the company, and membership of groups where support could be provided, such as associations, labour unions, sport fraternities and alike. Table 4 shows the questions corresponding to each aspect.

Table 4 | Information from the interviews used for each topic of analysis

Human Capital	Job experience	Section II_C
	Education	Section II_C
Financial Capital	Amount of funding	Section I_E
	Sources of funding	Section II_F
Social Capital	Business contacts	Section II_D
	Belonging to social groups	Section I_H

The job skills and education section provides information about the experience that entrepreneurs have lived through before starting their businesses. Such experience determines which kind of opportunities or businesses they can see when they arrive in the country of reception, for example a lawyer would have some affinity with the legal aspects of a potential business, while a car mechanic could look at the existence of cars and workshops in that field. When living a migratory experience, many migrants have changed their career due to discrimination, lack of job opportunities in their field, or possibility in other fields. More experience in a field could help to identify opportunities to bring novel ideas in aspects that are

needed for the economic sector or where there is an opportunity to improve a situation. Besides education and job skills, this study also took into account the proficiency of the language of the receiving country, in this case Italian. A special subsection is devoted to the role of language in the formation of innovative and replicative businesses ideas.

Financial aspects of the company are needed, as money is required to cope with a period of uncertainty when novel ideas are introduced. Novel ideas are usually associated with higher risks because the reaction of the customer is not known yet and the acceptance of the market is not granted. Information from the sources of funding that migrant entrepreneurs have used includes formal sources (e.g. banks) and informal sources (e.g. loan from a relative or friend).

5.2.1 | Validity of the analysis

The contextual information was collected with the use of secondary data available on websites, in institutional reports, on media sites and in legal archives. The use of official information increases the validity of the arguments and it has been updated from the early draft of this text until the final presentation of the study.

One of the important limitations is the use of Italian in the material from the interviews. Despite my use of that language, details might be missed when going through the available material. That is why the choice of using descriptive statistics coming from the responses of migrant entrepreneurs is a way to minimize the bias in the presentation of the information received from them.

Another limitation is the generalization of the analysis. The number of types of services are not represented completely by the number of cases used for this case, there is an over-representation of personal services. Such situation implies that migrants who did not answered the invitation letter, and who might have different situations, are not included in the analysis. Still, the case is a pioneer effort to gather information from such a population and present their situation.

In my role as resrcher, being able to live in that city contributed to understand the view of migrant entrepreneurs. My perspective of being a migrant contributed to comprehend the interviewees' references about places or traditions. At the same time, it limited the understanding of the choice of their type of business and their target customer because of my lack of personal experiences in the socio-economic situation of Brescia in the past years.

5.3 | CONTEXT FOR MIGRANT BUSINESSES AND NOVEL BUSINESS IDEAS

A central idea of the contextual aspect is that migrants are portrayed as being connected to their social networks and at the same time embedded to a regulatory framework and socio-economic conditions of the locality where they settle (Kloosterman et al., 1999). The mixed-embeddedness approach suggests that the marginalized position of migrants, with their low human and financial capital, is a decisive factor in the emergence of small-scale shops, low-skill production and labour-intensive work (Kloosterman et al., 2016). The context of Brescia provides certain conditions that migrant entrepreneurs face in this urban space, from the point

of view of the situations where the local society allows or restricts innovation among migrant entrepreneurs. This section pays special attention to programmes and institutions related to innovation, thus looking at the opportunity structure for innovative businesses from three main aspects: institutional, social, and economic (Kloosterman et al., 2016).

5.3.1 | Institutional aspects

There are local institutions involved in the promotion of innovation, such as chambers of commerce, ministries, the municipality and private organisations. In the existing policies of public institutions in Brescia/Lombardy, migrants are not mentioned as one of the target populations for projects. Instead, attention is given to technology-based enterprises from young and highly educated people in general. ISTAT, which is the national actor with the task of measuring and labelling companies using statistics, show results that go in that line: the region of Lombardy hosts the highest percentage of innovative companies, equal to 21.8% of the national total. Such an effort to promote innovation is based on the objective to monitor the economic impact of the public, as stated by a decree published in October 2012 (Decreto-Legge 179).

Looking at those policies has shown an expected situation where migrants are not part of the picture, but other groups are. There are 1219 companies formed by entrepreneurs in the target group of young people, accounting for 21.4% of total innovative companies. According to the sector of the economy, there are 4 in agriculture, 66 in commerce, 173 in industry, 959 in services, 14 in tourism and 3 unknowns. For those where data is available, their number of employees is also small: more than half of the companies employ fewer than 20 employees each. Their level of production does not exceed half a million euros per year with some sporadic outliers declaring to produce between 1 and 5 million euros worth per year. 859 companies declare to have a capital of less than 10 thousand euros; 300 companies have a capital between 10 and 100 thousand euros; 27 companies declare to have more than 100 thousand but less than 1 million euros; and 33 companies did not register their capital.

Another target group are female entrepreneurs. Of all innovative companies, 749 are owned by women, corresponding to 13.2% of the total. In terms of the sectors of the economy where they work, they are mainly located in services (550 companies), followed by industry (143 companies), commerce (41), tourism (9), agriculture (5), and unknown (1). The size of the companies does not exceed 10 employees. Their level of production does not exceed one million euros per year, except in three cases of big industrial companies declaring more than 5 million euros' worth of production. About their amount of capital: 535 companies have a capital of less than 10 thousand euros; 164 with a capital of up to 100 thousand euros; 18 companies have above 100 thousand euros but below 1 million; 1 company has more than 1 million euros; and 31 companies have not registered data for their capital.

ISTAT shows that in 2014, there were 5466 individuals owning an innovative company, of whom 96.1% are Italians and 3.9% are migrants. This means a total of 213 innovative migrant companies. In comparison with other target groups like young adults and women, migrants have the least number of companies in the innovative sector as well as the smallest distribution

across economic sectors. The industries with the higher percentage of migrants are as follows: scientific research (4.7%), preparation of data, hosting and web portals (4.3%), production of software and informatics (4.2%), and other services (4.1%). Migrant companies are concentrated in the service sector (127 companies), followed by industry (27) and commerce (3).

Given that those statistics show the marginal presence of migrants among those innovative companies, the question arises about whether the fact that migrants are present only marginally is due to decisions of public institutions or migrants' own actions, i.e. staying out of those innovative sectors. To try to answer that, I will now discuss the way that innovation is conceived in those reports and the situation of those innovative companies owned by migrants.

Table 5 | Level of education of migrants compared to Italians (source: ISTAT)

totals in thousands of people	Secondary Diploma (%)			Bachelor – Post-graduate (%)			Total of education levels (%)		
	Italian	Foreigner	Total	Italian	Foreigner	Total	Italian	Foreigner	Total
2004	95,8	4,2	9.667	96,8	0,5	3.152	95,7	4,3	22.363
2005	95,2	4,8	9.852	96,1	0,6	3.305	94,8	5,2	22.407
2006	94,9	5,1	10.132	95,6	0,7	3.491	94,3	5,7	22.758
2007	94,1	5,9	10.200	95,3	0,8	3.673	93,7	6,3	22.894
2008	93,1	6,9	10.330	94,8	1,0	3.938	92,7	7,3	23.090
2009	92,4	7,6	10.352	94,8	1,0	3.923	92,1	7,9	22.699
2010	91,9	8,1	10.424	94,5	1,1	3.970	91,5	8,5	22.527
2011	91,4	8,6	10.537	94,6	1,1	4.055	91,0	9,0	22.598
2012	91,1	8,9	10.499	94,4	1,2	4.265	90,7	9,3	22.566
2013	90,7	9,3	10.344	94,5	1,2	4.396	90,2	9,8	22.191
2014	90,5	9,5	10.491	94,0	1,4	4.537	89,7	10,3	22.279
2015	90,4	9,6	10.505	93,8	1,4	4.725	89,5	10,5	22.465
2016	90,9	9,1	10.639	94,4	1,3	4.845	89,5	10,5	22.758
2017	91,4	8,6	10.653	94,3	1,4	5.156	89,5	10,5	23.023

According to ISTAT, an innovative company must meet the following conditions: a) *size*: no more than 5 million euros of revenue, plus no surplus for the benefit of shareholders; b) *time of creation*: below 60 months are start-ups and above are SMEs (small- and medium-sized enterprises); c) *focus*: on high technological development with no less than 15% on R&D, or being a holder of a patent, or having no less than 2/3 of employees with a tertiary education. A migrant business needs to meet the condition of size, which does not seem to be a problem since the majority of migrant businesses are micro, small and medium sized businesses; the same applies to the time of creation, as some could be start-ups while others are SMEs. The third condition of focus is the one that is difficult to comply with, given the current situation of migrants in Italy: lower levels of education and lower use of technological development. Table 5 shows the level of education

of migrants compared to Italians, and it provides a good picture of the numeric differences in which only a fraction of those percentages of migrants with at least tertiary education turn to entrepreneurship. At the local institutional level, the panorama for migrants in the city of Brescia goes along a similar line. The projects supported by the municipality are not targeted at migrant entrepreneurs. Brescia is currently aiming for a larger use of digital technology, and the target public to achieve their goal is highly skilled and young entrepreneurs. The Smart City of Brescia project promotes the use of digital tools in the daily practices of its inhabitants. Technological initiatives cover an array of topics such as: Wi-Fi coverage for the city centre, automation of public lighting, incubators for young professionals, digitalization of the public library and the implementation of digital signatures and online payments.

The point of view, as seen in Figure 5, of migrant entrepreneurs provides relevant information about their expectations and their experience with public institutional actors. When asked about the possibility of receiving some kind of support from public institutions in terms of innovation, the respondents showed a divided opinion. While 30 migrant entrepreneurs said that they would not receive any support, 26 said they would receive some kind of support and 14 were unsure about what would happen. The answers were divided for each of the five levels of innovation obtained before, and the trend shows that entrepreneurs with lower innovation have lower certainty about receiving any public support.

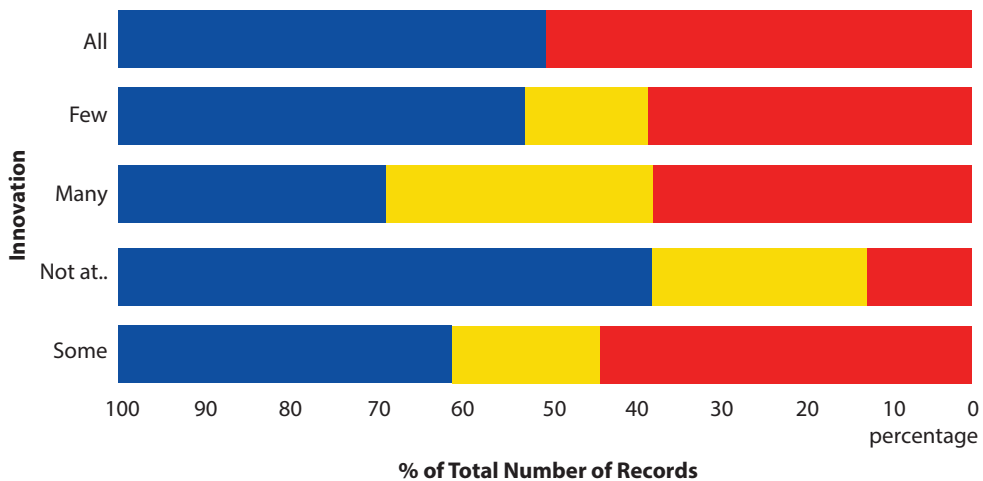


Figure 5 | Are public institutions able to support innovation in your company?
(Blue = No / Red = Yes / Yellow = Do not know)

To contrast the opinion of the interviews about the role of public institutions, the question about aspects that can be done is also included. Table 7 shows a summary of ideas mentioned, from which it is clear that many migrant entrepreneurs are not aware of the procedures needed to hop on the trend of innovation. In fact, their concerns are related to securing funding, dealing with administrative problems and facilitating collaboration among themselves.

Table 6 | Summary of ideas of migrant entrepreneurs about the role of public institutions

Providing workshops about applications for European, Italian or city-level funds
Support for educational programmes and technology upgrades
Stop creating more problems for companies
Reduction of taxes and simplification of bureaucracy and contracts
Collaboration with artisan associations - publicity
Becoming customers of migrant businesses

Among other actors in the city of Brescia, there seems to be more space for migrant entrepreneurs to establish connections with private actors. Such is the case of the University of Brescia, as the public research institution of the city provides opportunities for students to create spin-off companies as a plan to link academic research with companies. Of course, this plan is closed to all but very few foreigners who are part of the university – as we saw above the percentage of migrants in higher education is very low. Among private institutional actors, there are several new co-working spaces operating in the city and the region as part of the trend to support collaborative economy, and cooperation among freelancers and nascent companies. Examples of such spaces are Talent Garden, Open Space and La Fabbrica dei Mestieri (currently closed). Their websites (as the picture here) do not show any particular interest in targeting migrant entrepreneurs, though they do boast of their international partners, networking with international partners and access to business connections.

Founded in Brescia, Italy, in 2011, Talent Garden is Europe's leading innovation platform and coworking network for digital innovation. Today we have 23 campuses in 8 countries (Albania, Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Spain) hosting thousands of talented people, including startups, freelancers, companies and large corporations.



Create global connections

Our network hosts over 3,500 innovators including freelancers, startups, agencies, entrepreneurs, investors, students and companies of all sizes. Open 24 hours a day, our campuses have workstations, meeting rooms, training rooms, laboratories, fablabs – everything that innovators need to succeed. Uniquely, each campus is part of a European network that allows for high levels of interaction and collaboration across Europe and the US.

SELECT YOUR CAMPUS

Screenshot 1 | Taken from the website of Talent Garden

As in the case of public institutions, migrant entrepreneurs were also asked about the possibility of receiving some kind of support from private institutions. In comparison with public support, private support does not receive a warm welcome and some entrepreneurs wonder what the interest behind that support could be. One clear message from Figure 6 is that migrant entrepreneurs expect more action from public institutions than from private ones.

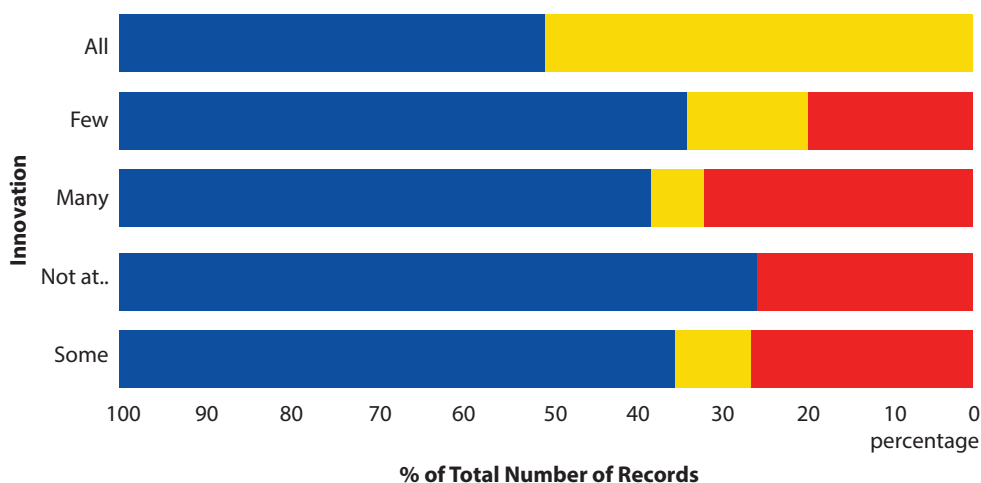


Figure 6 | Are private institutions able to support innovation in your company?
(Blue = No / Red = Yes / Yellow = Do not know)

The answers recorded also provided some concrete topics where migrant entrepreneurs would expect some support, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7 | Summary of ideas about the role of private institutions

To become their clients or improve access to markets.
To become funders/sponsors for ideas they need to be developed.
To improve personal connections.
No need for them, no idea where to find them and they only look to spend less.

5.3.2 | Socio-economic situation

The second aspect to look for opportunities in the context is the socio-economic situation of the population of the city. This refers to the way migrants interact with the local society and their process of being accepted. To start with, observation in this city show a visible presence of African, Maghrebi and Latin American migrants in certain neighbourhoods of the city centre, following previous findings that migrants who have stayed for longer periods in Italy have created certain relations with members of the local society according to their activities (Ambrosini, 2013). In terms of merchants, many migrants of Asian origin occupy stalls in the regular weekly markets with products such as clothing, kitchen appliances and household appliances. They provide goods for Italians and migrants alike – these products do not have an ethnic component but rather are cheap, to satisfy the needs of many locals. Such practice of selling cheap goods and competing fiercely in a weekly market implies a replication strategy to rapidly generate incomes with massive sales. In terms of service, the example of hairdressers is reported by the media (source: *Corriere della Sera*) to be differentiated by low prices where only migrants are working (the Chinese are mentioned) and high prices where a combination

of Italians and migrants are working. It was a surprise for the newspaper that a migrant owner would emphasize the quality over the price, and still employ Italians. Such changes in the market seem to be connected with the time they have lived in a place and got used to local market practice. As previous research (Ambrosini, 2012) has pointed out, migrant entrepreneurs in northern Italy with a longer presence follow formal procedures, employ Italians and have modern equipment, while the newly arrived use informal employees, old equipment, and inadequate accounting records.



Screenshot 2 | Image taken from the website of the newspaper Corriere de la Sera

In the bigger picture, the economy of Brescia, at the time of this research, showed mixed signs: expansion in services but contraction in trade and manufacturing (IRS, 2017). The employment rate increased compared to 2015 and it reached similar levels to the rest of the region of Lombardy. Such a situation contributed to the strength of Brescia as one of the poles of attraction for businesses where new entrepreneurs try to take a segment of that growing market. The notion of an ethnic market is built on the assumption that migrants require products and services to make life in the host country as similar as possible to what it was in their host country (Reyneri, 2011; Ambrosini, 2014). However, such an assumption leaves ignores the notion that the market also has wider needs for goods and services. The observation above regarding Asian merchants in the market is a good example of where Brescian demand for migrant business is not restricted to ethnic niches. Another example in the area of the provision of services is the education of children of migrants in Italy who have to follow regular state education according

to Italian standards, but the extra-curricular activities are niche, to provide services connecting them to specific cultural backgrounds of other countries. This niche could also be used by Italian families who want their children to learn and develop an international cultural background.

Table 8 | External and internal situations as incentives for innovation

External situations	Internal situations
You receive nothing from others	Expansion of the company
Taxes procedures could be changed	Change the location of the company
Support from the state	Technological upgrade
Increase of online requests	Better qualified staff
More quality controls	

However, when asking migrant entrepreneurs if they felt that the external situation of the city is positive for innovation, their replies were far from positive. They do not see many incentives for innovation (Table 8), as most of the answers pointed in that line. Such a situation contributes to explaining the low levels of innovation of this group.

When it comes to the barriers of the socio-economic context, the crisis that hit the Italian economy was still a topic being repeated by statistical reports on the economic situation. Many businesses that closed in the past years were starting to recover but still weak at the same time (Cesareo, 2018). Novel business ideas may have problems to grow in such a scenario, since customers are not willing to spend on something that they have no prior experience of. The findings from the respondents show some of these aspects, but it is noted that half of the entrepreneurs responded that they lacked a clear idea of which barriers could be removed to promote innovation. For the other half, the answers are summarized in Table 9. High levels of competitions and taxes were frequently mentioned as external situations, while small markets and difficulties with staff were mentioned as internal ones.

Table 9 | External and internal situations as barriers for innovation

External situations	Internal situations
Bureaucratic procedures and taxes	Lack of time
High level of competition	Lack of Italian staff for Italian clients
Access to loans	Small size of market in the sector
Difficulty of hiring/firing staff	Low experience of the staff
The costs of innovating	

To close this aspect, migrant entrepreneurs were asked about the prospects for the next year concerning the continuation of their companies. It is interesting to note that some of those companies with lower levels of innovations (some, few or not at all) are also those who had negative forecasting for the coming year. If we group the 3 levels in the middle (some and

many) then they show greater positivism about the future. Companies claiming to be all about innovation are divided between the same situation for the future, or better. The association between these two variables is not statistically significant due to a small n, but it does show some cases where the agency of entrepreneurs connects to the contextual factors.

5.3.3 | Geographical aspects: migrant entrepreneurs in the city of Brescia

The difference of geographical levels is relevant for innovation because of the possibilities to expand new ideas to other markets and the needs for such companies to operate in a city. Most innovation is being developed in urban centres where skilled labour is large, exchange of ideas is crucial and there is a market to test and launch products. From the companies interviewed for this research, 43 companies are operating in the urban space of Brescia, while 7 are operating at the level of the province. This situation means that two thirds of the companies are deeply connected with the local economy, where they expect to have enough customers for the products they provide. There is a group of companies (10) working in the area of Lombardy or northern Italy. Of the remainder, 13 companies focus on the Italian market and 5 companies operate at an international level.

To understand the choice of the geographical location, the following table provides the main reasons for migrant entrepreneurs to choose Brescia. Some of those reasons have an economic purpose, such as the need to find clients or to have a suitable office. Reasons related to migratory experience are important because they provide a better understanding of reasons that Italians would not experience. The search for potential customers and familiarity with a higher presence of people with the same ethnic origin is important. Furthermore, the role of family and having a home nearby suggest that these businesses are focused on smaller geographical spaces where they frequent daily, without the need or the will to go to locations further away.

Table 10 | Summary of the reason to choose Brescia for entrepreneurship

Easy to reach and good location
He/she was already employed here
There are clients nearby
Mother or father had the business already
Price of renting an office was good / enough parking facilities
Other migrants frequent the area / residence is near

At the same time that the business was set up in Brescia, there are other reasons why this urban space was chosen. Specific questions about other topics were asked to the respondents to find out which opportunities or barriers they saw in Brescia. Regarding the availability of work experience, most of the cases mentioned being proficient in the way services are provided as the quotes below illustrate, but only a couple of them mentioned being proficient in management and human resources. Being an entrepreneur and knowing where novel ideas are needed is of

great importance for innovation, but keeping the company alive through the simultaneous role of manager is also a major concern.

Previous experience, to know the clients and to know how to listen and be open
(L'esperienza precedente, conoscenza dei clienti, sapere ascoltare, essere aperto)

Interview Code 228

I have another travel agency in [another country], I already have the experience (Ha un'altra agenzia di viaggi in [altro paese], ha già l'esperienza)

Interview Code 251

When looking for expertise in the economic sector of the migrant business, the answers go in line with the recognition of academic credentials from the national state, but also many respondents mention that they followed courses in Brescia or nearby cities. The importance of learning the language that is spoken in the city is also important, as well as help they can receive from friends.

Asking about the welcoming rules of starting a business, the entrepreneurs had a negative impression about the legal procedures, taxes and permits. Many complain about the lack of clear procedures and the time it takes to complete them, so they chose to hire an external administration advisor to take care of it. Also, as foreigners they mention not being able to access funds from public institutions and not being given any facility for starting a business.

The final topic asked was the level of competition; most of the responses describe a high number of competitors. Some comments mention a particular group of migrants as those who fight for low prices and quality, as can be read in the quote below. Others emphasize that their clients are loyal and that there is enough for all businesses. Despite introducing novel services, migrant entrepreneurs are not able to create a temporary monopoly of the market because, as they describe, they focus on small-scale business models and other migrants replicate such ideas quickly.

Maybe there are ...[other nationality] people who spoiled the market with their low prices (Forse ci sono i ...[altra nazionalità] che hanno rovinato il mercato con i prezzi bassi)

Interview Code 238

In Table 11, there is a summary of the main topics mentioned above:

Table 11 | Opportunities and barriers of Brescia in various topics

Availability of work experience	Availability of expertise	Welcoming rules	Competition
Own previous experience in the core activity – including other countries + country of origin	Courses taken in Brescia or other parts of Italy (university, professional or artisan)	Bureaucratic procedures take money and time, forcing informality in the waiting period	Many competitors. Other migrants offer lower prices
Staff is well trained	A qualification to operate in the Italian market	No special rules for foreigners	Aggressive strategies, fight for costs
Help from sales person and tax advisor	Friends complement his/her abilities	Help from external administration advisor to deal with permits and rules	Clients are loyal and there is enough for all
No or little experience in management or HR	Studies in the same area	No access to public funds	
Being a migrant him/herself	Learning Italian		

5.4 | MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS' OPTIONS: WHAT TO USE, WHERE TO GET FUNDS, WHO TO ASK FOR SUPPORT

In the previous section, the contextual conditions of Brescia do not seem to promote (innovative) entrepreneurial ideas of migrant entrepreneurs. The situation, seen from the eyes of the entrepreneurs, was exemplified by the responses of the interviews. Even if the contextual aspect goes against innovation, the potential to combine ideas into novel services can be seen from the individual side acting in that context. There are examples where this situation has happened. For instance, Chinese entrepreneurs in the clothing sector of Prato combined the existing design and brand of the local industry with production and delivery methods focused on Asia. As a consequence, innovative fashion design and production were initiated in the clothing industry (Zhang & Zhang, 2016). Such favourable conditions are somehow absent in Brescia. Regardless, there are cases where new business ideas catch the opportunities of the market, while others are doomed to subsistence low-profit businesses. To better understand the interaction between the context and the individual characteristics, this section uses the framework proposed by Aldrich (2005) when studying entrepreneurship: the characteristics of their human, social, and financial capital. This guiding framework is applied to the context of the receiving urban location, and the situation in the country of origin is not looked at for now. In the following section there is a further exploration of the limits and possibilities for novel services delivered by migrant businesses in the context of Brescia.

5.4.1 | Transfer of ideas from work experience and education

An entrepreneur who is experienced in and has familiarity with a given sector can introduce novel ideas when using previous experience and know-how (Baumol, 2006; Hunt, 2011). This advantage consists in the precise identification of the needed improvement of a product, a reorganisation of a chain of production or a marketing strategy. An inexperienced entrepreneur

could also venture to introduce a novelty, but there is a higher risk of replicating existing ideas or introducing new ideas that do not fit. Those conditions of the use of human capital as one of the main facilitators to develop new ideas for innovation has been documented by several studies (Jensen, 2014; Saxenian, 2002; Zheng & Ejermo, 2015). In this sub-section, I go further to explain the human capital associated with educational credentials and work experience. Furthermore, the role of the local language is added as another characteristic of the human capital required for migrants (Hovhannisyan & Keller, 2014).

Work experience is considered one of the main predictors of entrepreneurship and innovation (Hunt, 2011). Most of the interviewees had previous experience in the same economic sector as their current businesses. As said before, an entrepreneur who is familiar with common economic practices in a sector has an advantage to innovate when using previous experience and know-how. The advantage of having experience is the precise identification of improvement in a product, a chain of production or marketing. There are some common findings in this topic: migrant entrepreneurs typically face a mismatch with their pre-migration work experience (Fullin & Reyneri, 2011). The first constituent refers to the previous job experience: there is a concentration of migrant workers in the lowest positions of the sector with low levels of innovation, such as domestic service, catering, tourism, construction work and shops (Ambrosini, 2012). As described in the previous section, around half of the companies interviewed offer a personal professional service, such as beauty salons, tailoring, clothing repair, travel agencies, laundry or cleaning. These types of business offer low barriers of qualification for migrants to start their businesses in comparison to sectors like education or medical care, where experience or educational credentials are needed.

From the interviews, 10 cases mentioned having no previous work experience in Italy and they coincide in the two lower scales of innovation, except one case who claimed to have many innovations. This case is quite interesting because of several reasons related to work experience. The current owner inherited the business from her father who started the business approximately 20 years ago, so she had not worked anywhere else before having this business. She describes herself as being the hub for co-ethnics with her provision of food recipes and handicrafts; and she also states that her goal is to open the cultural practices of her country of origin for Italians:

To bring together people from my country living here, to offer them with their products in Italy, to give a service, to make Russian culture known to Italians (Per vicinare la popolazione del mio paese che abita qua, per trovare i loro prodotti in Italia, per dare il servizio, per fare conoscere agli italiani la cultura russa)

Interview Code 249

The combination of the work experience of the father of the entrepreneur in the quote above with the entrepreneur's youth and motivation to Italian customers resulted in the change of the business model into the digital space. She opened a website for the delivery of products,

approached the Italian market with marketing on websites in Italian, and improved the package of the products sent. By making changes to the way she provides catering services, she feels satisfied with the growth of the business in the past years and the potential growth for the future.

For the rest of respondents with a high level of innovation, the combination of work experience and previous work experience in Italy offers two interesting cases in two different areas: digital consultancy and hairstyling. The first case (Interview Code 208) combines work experience of working at the embassy of his country of origin, working for a marketing company and leading an association of neighbours. From this last experience he joined with friends to create websites, develop digital apps and design flags. According to his description, these services include a lot of creativity in producing novel websites and designs for clients. The second case (Interview code 243) has experience as a hairstylist for around ten years in his country of origin. He said that his services are always new and adapting to the needs of the clients. He also said that new trends in his business are the use of natural products and the use of technology, so he combines his expertise in henna, using non-invasive techniques for beauty treatments and products without ammonia. His experience matches the niche of customers who look for the hair and face treatments with natural products.

Besides work experience, the time owning the business also adds to the experience and opens opportunities for entrepreneurs to identify new ideas to add. As Figure 7 shows, the date when they started the business is concentrated after the 2000s. The main reasons for this are the time of migration as well as the rise in demand for services in Brescia. On average, the respondents have been running their businesses for 11.5 years. Fourteen companies out of 48 state that their process of identifying a new idea is based on the previous involvement in the same business initiatives. For example, the experience of a Romanian owner allows her to invest in laser technology to use for skin treatments, as well as to import specific Romanian creams into the Brescian market.

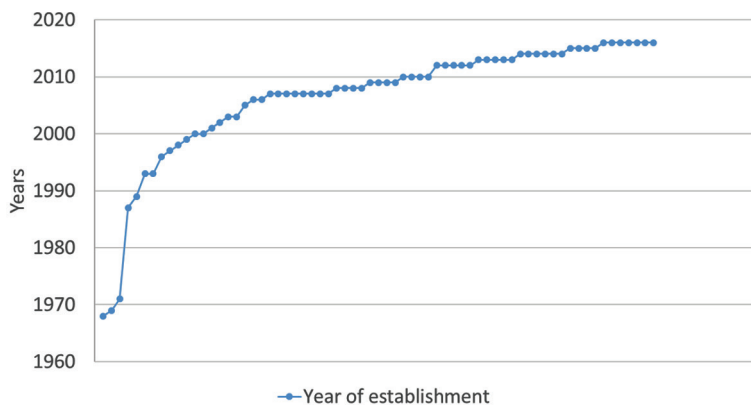


Figure 7 | Year when migrant entrepreneurs started the business

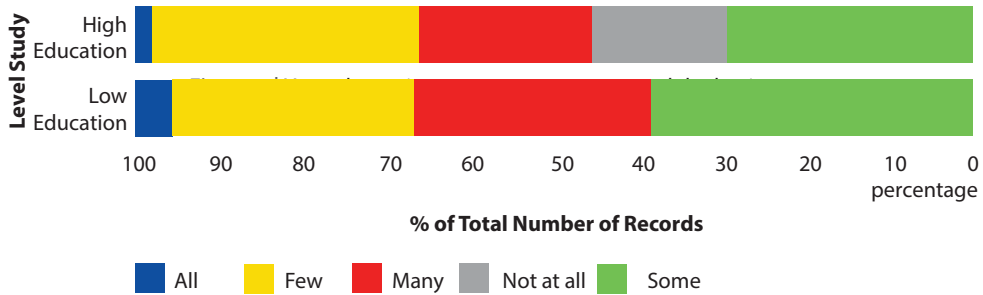


Figure 8 | Percentages of levels of innovation by low or high level of education of respondents

One of the key characteristics of small, sometimes family businesses is the repetition of traditional practices over time and the resistance to new ideas. The conditions of the type of economic sector where migrant businesses operate could result in low or hidden innovation (Signoretti, 2016). For example, beauty treatment and hairdressers are in the same sector where the replication of successful practices with clients and the gradual introduction of new services and products imply continuous and fierce competition. Experience accumulated over time contributes to replication but also to the consolidation of a loyal group of clients who value the service they receive. The interviews showed that some migrant entrepreneurs explained how their clients were loyal and like the service they provide without many changes or novelties. Perhaps another characteristic of the migrant entrepreneurs can account for innovation capacities more precisely.

Education credentials is another of the constituent topics of human capital. The data was recorded at two levels: low levels of education for those from primary and secondary school, and high levels for those with university and post-graduate degrees. Our data showed that 2/3 of migrant business owners declared a higher degree of education while the rest stopped after secondary education, with two having only finished primary education. This information includes courses and degrees obtained in Italy, even if most of the cases completed their studies in their country of origin.

It would be expected that those entrepreneurs with a higher degree of education would show a high self-assessment of innovation, but in fact most of them evaluate their business at the low-medium level of innovation (some or few). Comparing with the percentages of cases expressing they have few innovations, both groups have similar percentages, while a higher percentage of the group with low education expressed having some or many innovative activities. Such findings would need a larger number of observations to confirm the tendency. For now, Figure 8 gives some hints that education is important but not a decisive path for innovation. With the cases interviewed, it is evident that the level of education does not match the self-perception of innovation of migrant entrepreneurs, and this includes the education that migrants have received in Italy.

Migrants in Italy commonly face the penalization of their educational degrees. The limitation for innovation is caused by the mismatch of previous studies with their application in a business

idea. The knowledge acquired in a university degree does not always trigger the search for new ideas to apply in business. Only six cases out of the group of 44 entrepreneurs with higher education degrees state that their business is based on their previous education – one example is the education diploma in aesthetics of the Romanian entrepreneur who was the opening case description. The penalization of educational credentials can be attributed to several explanations, including lower skills provided by the educational system of the countries of origin, and the bureaucratic difficulty of a formal recognition of the educational attainment (Fullin, 2011). Ambrosini (2012) describes the widespread over-qualification of migrant workers in care and domestic services. Migrants face a higher probability of getting a low qualified job compared to natives, everything else being equal (Ballarino & Panichella, 2015). The ethnic penalisation in over-qualified professionals persists over time, without significant change also for those staying 6-9 years (Fullin, 2011). Consequently, there is a trade-off over time between less risk of being unemployed but persistent over-education (Fullin & Reyneri, 2011; Ballarino & Panichella, 2015). One topic where more research is needed is the role of language proficiency during education, and this constitutes one extra factor that can fall under the concept of human capital.

On the third and last constituent, the role of Italian language, this enhances the capacity of migrant entrepreneurs to understand business-related practices in the city of Brescia. Running a business involves communication skills in Italian: registration of the business, taxation, and recruitment of employees (Solano, 2012), and not only regarding the content of a text but also inter-personal communication. Communication skills are used to transfer business ideas within one language or to another. The use of Italian can ease the access connection with innovative and specialized companies inside a sector and a geographical area (Ramella, 2015a). Business ideas from migrants also spread inside the community sharing their own language, following the patterns found of migrant business to provide products and services to co-ethnics (Zhou & Portes, 1993). Migrant entrepreneurs who interact with Italians have the advantage of spreading and receiving ideas around Italian circles: 66 of our respondents reported to use Italian with at least a B1 level, while the rest did not reach this threshold. The isolation of migrant entrepreneurs does not help this situation. Each language offers a different door for business purposes to other groups, and that is why Figure 9 illustrates the number of languages used by the level of innovation reported. The number of languages includes Italian and also the language of their country of origin, thus in most cases the starting point is 2 languages being spoken.

Each level of innovation shows the amount of entrepreneurs who declare having at least a proficient level in a language. To find the number of languages besides Italian and their native language, a simplification would be to reduce 2 to each value. However, mastering other languages at the same time is challenging and time-consuming. This explains why migrants pay a delay price for their active participation in the labour market (Colombo, 2007). Indeed, one finding is that such principle of delaying the participation as employees also applies to entrepreneurship. As an illustration, the Romanian entrepreneur from the opening quote who has spent fourteen years in Italy, worked and followed courses of aesthetics and Italian language for ten years.

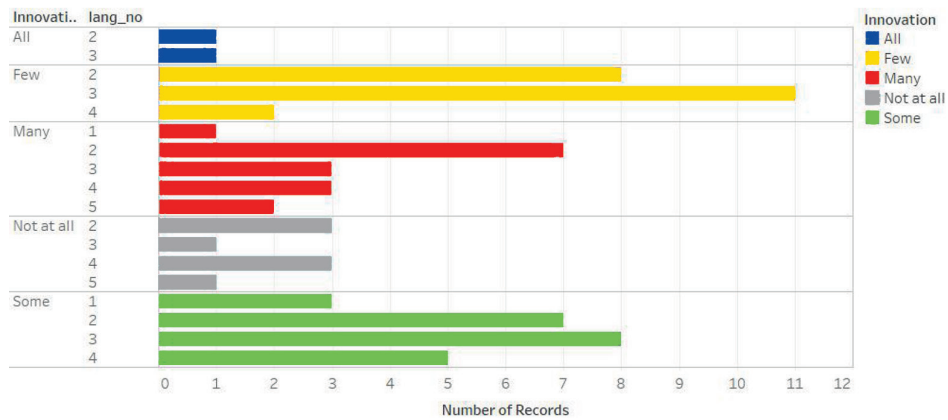


Figure 9 | Number of languages by reported innovation level

One aspect that could need a further exploration is the actual use of this variety of languages for business purposes only, or a selective use of languages to compartmentalize social spaces. There could be a trade-off between learning a language and running a business. Migrant entrepreneurs with proficiency in more languages are able to grasp ideas from different groups and to translate opportunities across languages. But, entrepreneurs who express being highly innovative speak only their mother tongue and Italian, thus leaving time and efforts for business purposes.

5.4.2 | Availability of funding

Businesses usually require additional funding to develop the research process of a new idea, either to implement an innovation or to adopt it. Previous research shows that migrant communities face a trade-off between lending money and promoting employment inside the same ethnic group (Rusinovic, 2008; Zhou & Portes, 1993). In addition, migrant entrepreneurial activities fall repeatedly into the ethnic trap: small investments, subsistence revenues, limited educational requirements, replicative economic activities and loans from ethnic communities or shop-owners' associations (Kloosterman, 2010). From the service companies studied, one third report to have acquired additional funding to improve their business. Many businesses use the revenues generated in previous periods of time but without accumulating considerable sums.

Table 12 | Informal funding for migrant entrepreneurs

From whom	Range of amount received (euros)
Friends	0–20,000
Family	5,000–50,000
Landlord	N/A
Lender and Friends	1,000–5,000
Family	50,000–100,000
Friends	50,000–100,000
Lender, friends and family	250,000–500,000

From companies receiving some external funding, there are those receiving funds from formal sources and those from informal ones. Formal sources refer to loans from banks, credit from a cooperative, association, or funds from an investment group. Some interviewees mentioned that they applied to get loans but were rejected because they were not able to prove their business was profitable. Informal sources are money transfers from family or friends, and loans from unregistered lenders. The 15 cases from Table 12 indicate the amounts that are being asked for business purposes, i.e. whether they are low (range from 5 to 10 thousand euros) or high (50 thousands euros and above). These amounts were compared to the assessment of innovation, but from the evidence we cannot assume that larger amounts are used for R&D or to test new services. Extra funding was used to buy technological appliances and to start businesses.

There are ten companies from the interviews reporting the use of formal sources, and among them, the bank is mentioned by almost all. The opportunity for innovation relates to the use of those amounts in the acquisition of machines with advanced technology, for example the introduction of renewable energy with solar panels and equipment for asbestos removal by an Albanese entrepreneur. For those seventeen companies reporting the use of informal funding, the role of family is as strong as the role of friends. However, in this group there are only a couple of cases declaring high levels of innovation. In both cases, the companies use family funding to support the introduction of depilation machines, airbrush tanning and facial products for beauty treatments.

For the rest of cases without funding sources, they have two limitations to introduce new technology or products. One, they lack connections willing to fund their business ideas. Having migrated implies that a major part of their family and friends are left in another country. However, it has been suggested that the absence of sources of informal funding in Italy is compensated through the use of transnational ties (Solano, 2012). Two, they fall into the ethnic trap: funding from subsistence revenues and reducing costs of labour implies employing co-ethnics, and entering entrepreneurship avoids unemployment (Marchand & Siegel, 2014; Portes, 1995; Reyneri, 1998).

The main limitation to accessing formal loans is commonly attributed to the nature of the business activities: replicative companies tend to be associated with strong but slow growth, a reasonable level of competition and an identified target of customers; while innovative companies tend to be associated with high risk, exponential growth, a diffuse range of potential customers and specialized competition. The first case makes loans more accessible, while the second case involves a higher risk (Schumpeter, 1943).

5.4.3 | Taking part in activities with social groups

Being able to share time with other migrants may invoke some type of solidarity and in-membership feeling (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993). Such situation being applied to entrepreneurship refers to the capacity of entrepreneurs to maintain privileged access to resources through connections or club memberships (Portes & Vickstrom, 2011). In that situation, there are also weaker links bridging across social groups that determine the embeddedness

of individuals in social networks that provide resources and information (Granovetter, 2005; Molina et al., 2015). The example of the geographical concentration in Silicon Valley shows transnational and local networks facilitating the attraction of Asian professionals, resulting in the development of technology (Aldrich, 2005; Hunt, 2011). The northern regions of Lombardy, Veneto and Piedmont have the largest presence of innovative companies (ISTAT statistics, 2015). For such companies, the key has been the connection to universities, governmental institutions, business groups and financial actors to profit from innovative ideas (Ramella, 2015a; Signoretti, 2016).

In this section, being part of social groups is assumed to provide inner access to resources, information and advice. From the total respondents, 49 migrant entrepreneurs interact with at least one of the following types of groups: religious, sport, migrant or business. Belonging to a business group gives an advantage over other companies, because it provides a place to interact and exchange specific advice, privileged information or moral support. That opportunity has the potential to turn into support for an innovation or replication of profitable practices. Those reporting innovation in their businesses prefer an affiliation with a sport or a business group. This affiliation contrasts with the group reporting no innovation, where the preferred belonging is with groups interested in sport, religion and migration. Groups of entrepreneurs have the advantage of offering exchange of advice, employees' recommendations and info on bureaucratic regulations in Brescia. Some informal groups were created among migrant entrepreneurs, but there is still few contacts with local entrepreneurs in those business groups. Groups around sporting or religious activities and groups with co-ethnics share information for non-business purposes, but entrepreneurs still need to build them for their personal matters.

Ethnic groups and associations palliate the lack of family support by providing necessary resources to new firms and providing demand for products of ethnic origin (Ambrosini, 2012). Migrant associations in Lombardy, notably from Peru and Senegal, implement projects of cooperation and economic development in their home countries by promoting business ideas for both Italians and migrants; while Eastern Europeans (namely Polish, Romanians and Ukrainians) organize the transportation of goods to satisfy the needs of Lombardy's ethnic communities (Ambrosini, 2014). Also, there is the case of Wenzhou Chinese entrepreneurs in the clothing industry of Prato, where the connections with local designers and professionals helped them to enlarge their companies and adapt to various types of customers (Zhang & Zhang, 2016).

Specialized workshops provide a common ground to exchange information to 20% of the interviewees, who had attended a session in a given expertise. At the same time, these interviewees belong to a sports or business group. Such insider condition allow entrepreneurs to gather novel ideas. In fact, half of the group who attended a workshop stated that they had innovated in their businesses. In the contrary, the access to experts is limited, because few cases report having worked with a specialist in the fields of marketing, R&D, production systems or technology development. One of the exceptions is an Albanian entrepreneur who diversified the provision of his services with technology in the past 3 years; he developed websites and trained the staff of a public office, while developing new software with another company.

Groups for exchange of information are using digital channels of communication because they compensate for the small number of connections to family and friends, by supporting the business and spreading the word to other clients. In order to balance the situation of migrants in Italy as being single individuals rather than family households (Reyneri, 2011), digital communication is used to contact people in other countries. Later studies showed entrepreneurs, in particular, being around 40 years old and having a family household (Solano, 2012), though still with a geographical dispersion of people they know. Digital channels for communication with business purposes are: company websites, instant messaging such as Skype, Facebook or WhatsApp groups, sites to promote the image like Pinterest or Instagram, and cloud storage of documents like Google+ and Dropbox. 80% of the interviewees use at least one of the above channels. Among those who innovate, the opportunity appears when using such platforms as free or low cost publicity methods or as customer service in real time. Websites offer a platform to show businesses to a wider audience, Facebook is used to make publicity, and WhatsApp is used to communicate with employees and clients.

5.5 | CONCLUSION

This chapter connects the fields of innovation studies and migration studies by analysing the individual characteristics of migrant entrepreneurs in relation to the context of Brescia, Italy. The topic of innovation has gained much attention due to the trend of companies in the service sector to use digital and automatized technology. For both opportunities and limitations, there is a mix of factors coming from the individual characteristics of entrepreneurs and the conditions of the receiving society. The findings show that migrant entrepreneurs contribute to the dynamism with micro and small businesses competing in specific niches of the local market, and with a combination of human, social and financial capital that is minimally used to introduce novel services. The conclusions cannot be generalized for all the population of migrant businesses in Brescia, due to the number of cases interviewed. However, it provides useful explorative information that has not been collected before about the provision of services and innovation by migrants. Their high skills in terms of education and work experience combines with few sources of funding and with similar social capital; plus the local context does not create conditions to exploit the benefits the migrant entrepreneurs could provide. Overall, few particular cases are able to introduce their novel services targeting very specific customers and using their distinct cultural background based on their migratory journey.

The theoretical framework for this case puts together the analysis of contextual conditions and of individual capacities. Contextual conditions vary from an urban space to another, and that is why a proper description of the conditions for innovation is useful before seeing what actions and possibilities are migrant entrepreneurs facing. The personal level of migrant entrepreneurs shows several limitations for migrants to engage in innovative activities. Restrictions in human, social and financial capital explain their poor access to funding, lack of training and weak group support. The ethnic nature of the personal connections of migrant entrepreneurs, as well as

inter-ethnic connections with Italians, are used to advertise services in the local market. Besides, digital channels of communication go in line with current digital trends to use them for business growth and marketing plans as well as for personal purposes.

The presence of migrant businesses is visibly transforming the urban centre of Brescia, and the stores located in that area. In the unobservable world of service companies, the quality and type of services available are also contributing to the diversity of choice for the local population. From a contextual perspective, a mix of social, economic and institutional levels seems to encourage innovation, but some of the migrant businesses are not able to catch that train. In fact, the contextual description shows the lack of specific support for migrants from local public actors, as well as sporadic contact with financial funders, such as banks or cooperatives, and training institutions, such as universities.

In that line, conditions in Brescia offer some opportunities for innovation, but the presence of migrant business with innovative products or service is unseen from official documents or statistics. Such a scenario, with a relative openness for innovation, suggests that the low presence of migrant businesses can be explained by other factors. Most people interviewed postpone entrepreneurship for a later stage, after acquiring educational credentials and language proficiency. Thus innovative strategies are also left for a later stage, in line with previous findings that innovation goes beyond the routine and provokes resistance, sometime fragile but also violent (Schumpeter, 1947). Innovation is found in some migrant companies whose owners have previous work experience or a specific educational background in their business area. Their current state follows the route of starting small and in line with the mainstream competition, and then they are able to introduce new ideas over time (Aldrich & Martinez, 2001).

One aspect that was not considered in this chapter was the contextual situation in the country of origin. Adding a layer about the people with whom entrepreneurs are still in contact for business purposes is dealt with in the following chapter. By adding it, the business ideas are seen as an outcome that have new aspects – aspects that already exist and aspects influenced by other people. The migratory experience becomes a stage of life where stimuli from ideas from both the countries of origin and destination play a pivotal role.

CHAPTER 6

Similarity and diversity in the connections of migrant entrepreneurs⁵

⁵ The case of Amsterdam is the basis for a chapter in the forthcoming book titled Immigrant Entrepreneurship and Urban Development edited by prof. Cathy Yang Liu and published by Springer

6.1 | INTRODUCTION

Two years ago I started a lunch club where the three of us get together once a month. We are three foreigners living in Amsterdam, working from home, working for ourselves, running our own businesses and when you work from home you don't have that network. You don't have that natural network, so the three of us decided to get together and have a sort of social lunch once a month where we choose where to go and that's great fun.

Interview code 110

The migrant entrepreneur described above is self-employed and shares his working office with his wife. He copes with the loneliness of his company by mixing personal activities, like a social lunch, with economic driven activities, like giving advice. Similarly, many self-employed and owners of micro companies have few people (or none) with whom they interact in the working environment. The question then arises: whom do they talk with about topics related to their businesses? Previous research has found benefits related to socialization in the workplace. Socializing inside companies is considered one of the strategies to increase exchange of information and stimulate productivity inside and among companies (Antonioli et al., 2009; Signoretti, 2016). When people talk to each other, the opportunities to shape a business idea increase as well as the feedback provided through those communication channels (Hall, 2006). Having small companies in mind, I explore the social connections that migrant entrepreneurs share their business ideas with. With this research, the migratory background of those entrepreneurs is further analysed to find the relation with novel ideas for their businesses.

iv) What is the role of diverse/homogeneous business connections of migrant entrepreneurs in the development and implementation of innovative / replicative business ideas? With this last question, the influence of the closest social contacts to the entrepreneur is acknowledged.

To begin, the term social connection is used to describe all the people that an entrepreneur is in contact with during his or her daily activities, including family, friends and acquaintances. It is complex to draw a strict line between those people whom a person describes as being part of his or her social connections. For a better clarification, (Portes & Sensenbrenner, 1993) discuss the embeddedness of immigrants and their use of social capital for specific purposes. A business connection is a person with whom the entrepreneur exchanges information related to economic activities, including social connections giving advice, support or engaging in an economic transaction. Examples of this kind of connection include specific professionals like marketing consultants, tax advisors, investment officers and the like, but it also includes friends who give advice or clients who give feedback about the product. (For a discussion about connections in the daily life of business people, see the review by (Ladkin et al., 2016)).

The specific case of migrants gives a unique perspective to look at the business connections of entrepreneurs. Given the geographical relocation, a set of business connections could remain from the past locations while some old connections can be removed and new connections created. The role of digital communication channels in allowing connections with contacts from other geographical locations is a main distinction of our contemporary times. For example, classmates in another country from a previous study programme could keep in contact through social media platforms, while at the same time current colleagues from work could meet in person regularly for social events.

The idea of the solo migrant entrepreneur who has few business connections in his/her workplace is replaced with the idea of a migrant entrepreneurs with social connections from other life spheres who potentially incorporate those social relationships in the sphere of business (Bianchi, Casnici, & Squazzoni, 2018). In the case above, the entrepreneur gets together with two other people to share social activities and discuss each of their business initiatives in a social environment. For solo migrant entrepreneurs, their social and business connections dependent on their migration journey. Some of the former work colleagues are based in the location where the migrant lived before, while some of the former classmates are based in another geographical location.

Sociological research suggests that geographical position and migration shape the way entrepreneurs carry out their economic activities (Aldrich & Waldinger, 1990; Kloosterman & Rath, 2001; Portes, 1995; Saxenian, 2007). However, the study of how these business connections are changing for migrant entrepreneurs has not been sufficiently addressed. And specifically, are those business connections shaping the introduction or adaptation of an economic innovation? Such questions are explored in this chapter.

6.1.1 | Structure of the chapter

Based on the last building block of the theoretical framework, the role of social connections is explored further in this chapter. Business connections are placed in two contexts: Amsterdam and Brescia: in the Dutch one to look at the knowledge stage, and in the Italian case to look at the decision stage. The factor of nationality of those connections and their geographical location play a major role because business connections could be useful for generation and adaptation of a business idea as well as for implementation in a particular context. While certain business connections of migrant entrepreneurs could act as supporters for the introduction of new products, others could act as inhibitors of its diffusion.

In section two, I explain the methods for data analysis. Both empirical cases are the core of the database in networks created for this research at the intersection of migration, entrepreneurship and innovation. The information used in this chapter is the network material from interviews of migrant entrepreneurs in the service sector. For the business connections of migrant entrepreneurs, scores of similarity contrast the migrant entrepreneur and his or her connections in terms of educational level, place of residence and country of origin. Those aspects were chosen because the theoretical framework of innovation signals education as one of the main sources of new ideas inside a geographical boundary (Asheim & Gertler, 2006; Bosetti et al.,

2015; Powell & Grodal, 2006; Ramella, 2015a). At the end of this section, I provide the limitations of the methods for the analysis of the data.

To look further at the knowledge stage, the case of Amsterdam looks at a migrant entrepreneur who creates a strategy to socialize with similar people and to talk further about their businesses. His migratory background provides him with an education, an economic position and social status that is different than the background of local entrepreneurs in his country of destination. The increasing role of modern digital communication technology is shifting the way people interact, and of course the way that people provide their services. Migrants stand out as newcomers to a particular geographical place where some of them start their business and have a possibility to add new ideas from their own experience.

Brescia is used to explore the decision stage when the business initiative has already started. The analysis is very similar to that in Amsterdam but pays attention to the people who play a major role in tasks related to the decisions being taken in daily activities of the company. Accountancy, administration, and marketing play a role at this stage. Migrants use a network of connections because the time and expertise available is not enough to take care of all aspects. There are good and bad consequences of that. On the good side there is a chance to create a network of collaboration, but conversely there is the chance of being ripped off and going bankrupt.

6.2 | METHODS OF ANALYSIS

This chapter uses a mixed methods strategy to explain the role of the business connections of immigrant entrepreneurs in the process of innovation. On the one side, there is a quantitative measure from the collection of ego-networks of entrepreneurs as a strategy to measure and visualize the connections among them (Crossley et al., 2015; Molina et al., 2015; Vacca et al., 2018). On the other side, there is a qualitative component to explore further ideal cases of migrant entrepreneurs using their connections built in the past in a current business initiative (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006; Kloosterman et al., 2016; Scott, 2006).

Ideal types are constructed from the cases interviewed in Amsterdam and Brescia separately, and for each of them there is an analysis of the use of diversity among their business connections. Diversity is seen from four different angles: nationality, age, level of education and place of residence. The most important step here is to find out the reasons why those connections have been kept over time and if they have any relationship with their innovativeness levels.

The methodological section in Chapter 3 described the details related to the design of the tool for data collection, the collection of respondents as well as the creation of databases. In this section, I focus on the methods to analyse the data collected. This data was collected from the point of view of the interviewee, and therefore the network is seen from the personal experience of the migrant entrepreneur. The roster, which collected information on the 509 connections of the respondents in Amsterdam and 284 in Brescia, provides information to compare similarities and differences between the entrepreneur and business connections. The interviews collected

data about their gender, age, level of studies, place of residence, country of origin, personal closeness with the interviewee and specific relationship of friendship, kinship or acquaintance, as shown below in Table 13.

Table 13 | Type of information used in Ego-Alters databases

Type of information	Type of data	Main remarks
sex	Categorical	Male / Female
age	Numeric	
years of company	Numeric	
year of migration	Numeric	
education	Ordinal	Secondary / University / Postgraduate
nationality	Categorical	By each country 1=home country / 2=the Netherlands or Italy / 3=other countries
place of residence	Categorical	By each country 1=The Netherlands or Italy / 2=Home country / 3=other countries
languages	Categorical	By each language
self-assessment of innovation	Ordinal	1 (no innovation) until 5 (totally innovative) in Italy and 1 (no innovation) until 10 (totally innovative in the Netherlands

When posing open questions about the involvement of those connections in the business, I was able to collect the insight of which people were relevant in the creation and development of a business idea, as well as those who were important in the implementation process of that idea. The questions used to gather qualitative information were:

- Who contributed to any of the following topics?
 - Boosting creative ideas that you applied in your business
 - Implementing new ideas into your business
 - Funding for the development and implementation of the new idea into your business
 - Support for the business (advice, professional consultancy, unpaid work)

When measuring innovation, the indicator used is the categorical variable asked in the questionnaire, ranging from 1 with no innovation to 5 (in Italy) or 10 (in the Netherlands) with total innovation. During the interviews, the respondents were asked to qualify the level of innovation in their business on a scale and to describe which activities in their business were innovative (OECD / EuroStat, 2005; Smith, 2006).

- On the following scale, how innovative is your business?
 - No innovation
 - A few of our activities are innovative
 - Some of our activities are innovative
 - Most of our activities are innovative
 - Totally innovative

The analysis of two types of data was required to write the findings. As explained before, there was a quantitative component of the ego-network analysis while at the same time there was the qualitative analysis from open questions. Innovation was kept as a categorical variable, so frequencies were obtained from the results and are commented on in the results' section.

For the network analysis, I was inspired by the mixed-methods approach from previous research of migrant entrepreneurs (Solano, 2015; Vacca et al., 2018). The R-script adapted lines from a previous work and resulted in the scores of the analysis used as a guide to select the ideal cases. For the qualitative analysis, The interviews from Amsterdam provide information about the creation of business ideas and the interviews from Brescia about the implementation of business ideas. The selected ideal cases are used as a representation of similar cases, and as a representation of the life trajectory of migrant entrepreneurs (Ambrosini, 2012; Rusinovic, 2006; Storti, 2014).

The ego-network analysis consisted of a comparison of the variable places of residence and the nationality of alters by each Ego. In the first instance, all alters were re-coded in three categories for each variable: home country, other country and the Netherlands or Italy, depending on the case. The variable education was recoded in an ordinal manner as follows: secondary, university and postgraduate. After, since the number of alters per Ego is not constant for all the interviewees, proportions were used to present the data in a comparable manner. The proportions of each category were calculated for each migrant entrepreneur according to the characteristics of each of the 509 alters in Amsterdam and 284 in Brescia. Finally, the EI index for similarity was calculated for each of those variables (Krackhardt & Stern, 1988), following the formula:

$$EI = \frac{(E - I)}{(E + I)}$$

The results are presented in a scale from +1 to -1 (Crossley et al., 2015). The positive outcome implies heterophily, i.e. that alters have different characteristics to egos, while the negative outcome implies homophily, meaning that alters have similar characteristics to egos.

The qualitative data was transcribed and stored in Excel and text files. Each of those transcriptions was coded as part of the connections being used for acquiring knowledge of business ideas or as part of the connections being used to take a decision about implementation. Selected quotes are used in the presentation of results in Section 6.3 and 6.4.

6.2.1 | Validity of the analysis

The analysis of this chapter constitutes a mixed-method approach to explore the role of connections in the services of migrant entrepreneurs. In that line, criticism could be made from both qualitative and quantitative sides (Gubrium et al., 2012) regarding the number of interviews, the representativeness of those interviewed and the choice of formulas. As said before, the results presented cannot be generalized for a whole population of migrant entrepreneurs in Amsterdam, or in Brescia. However, the results from the 101 interviews give a guideline to look at innovation and diversity from the migratory experience of entrepreneurs. A larger number of interviews needs to be done in further research to confirm the initial findings that are provided in this study, and to measure the presence of novel services in a more accurate way.

The choice of similarity measures is the simplest way to approach diversity (Budescu & Budescu, 2012; Zhan et al., 2015) and to look at the economic role for migrant entrepreneurs. There are however other ways to measure diversity that take into account, with more precision, the nesting of the connection for each entrepreneur and the relative weight of those who have a larger number of connections. There are many aspects that social network techniques could improve, but nonetheless the richness of qualitative material and explanation of how those networks are formed (Herz et al., 2014) are better represented with a mixed-methods approach.

6.3 | NETWORKS IN THE KNOWLEDGE STAGE OF NOVEL BUSINESS IDEAS

6

Hannah is from Austria and she has been living in Amsterdam for the past 20 years. She studied Economics in Austria and had a stable job at a family company run by her Dutch husband. They decided to divorce seven years ago, and as part of that process she decided it was her time to leave that job. Her daughter attended primary school and Hannah did not want to be a full-time mother staying at home. Among the circle of international parents she met at her daughter's school, she was asked to help them because they did not know how to deal with daily aspects of living in the Dutch society, for example with letters from the municipality or arranging renovations in their apartments. She decided it was an opportunity to start her own business as a helper for international people settling in Amsterdam and looking for solutions for problems related to housing, utilities and language. Since she worked from home, only a small monetary investment was needed, but a lot of time was used to market her company as a provider of this particular service. She mentions that her choice of Amsterdam to start a business happened as an outcome of living in this city for many years and it feeling like her home. She is proud of being open-minded and willing to meet new people and new cultures, and uses those personal characteristics in her business. She qualifies her business as a provider of something her customers find relevant: she gives solutions for their everyday problems. Still, she acknowledges that being a migrant herself has helped her to target her business to other newly arrived foreigners; she has learned the Dutch language and understands the way that culture and legal procedures work in the Netherlands.

Interview Code 112

The story of Hannah would seem to be a typical case of a migrant entrepreneur who engages with a niche market of other migrants and uses limited resources. Nevertheless, there is one aspect to look at further: the introduction of new services in the local market resulted from her experience and her social connections in the particular context of Amsterdam's market. Facing the social context of this city, she used her personal characteristics to look at local practices and learn about them, as well as to learn about legal and tax procedures. As she was settling in, she knew people who helped her with housing, language, shopping and more. Moreover, leaving her job pushed her to turn her own lived experience into a business idea: namely, providing services to settle in the city. Her novel service received a tremendous impulse when she started talking to other people and sharing information, and she later turned it into a business. This section uses Hannah as well as other migrant entrepreneurs from the interviews conducted in Amsterdam.

6.3.1 | Education and novel ideas

When referring to innovation and novel ideas, the associated idea is the level of education. Having a high educational level implies many years of being polished by the educational system, completing primary and secondary education and specializing with higher vocational training or university studies. The spirit of education is thought to contribute to the stages of design and possibly to prepare for the adoption of an innovation. An important effect of spending time in the educational system means that social connections are built in that period. In the cases presented, those connections have lasted and evolved to become business contacts. In Figure 10 below I show the proportion by level of education of the alters of each Ego. The colour red, showing the secondary level of education, is associated with another characteristic of alters: their age. Older business contacts who only completed secondary education are part of the business contacts embedded in relationships like parents, mentors, family or family friends. When combining the colour blue and light blue, showing a high degree of education, the predominance of business connections with at least one university degree is clear.

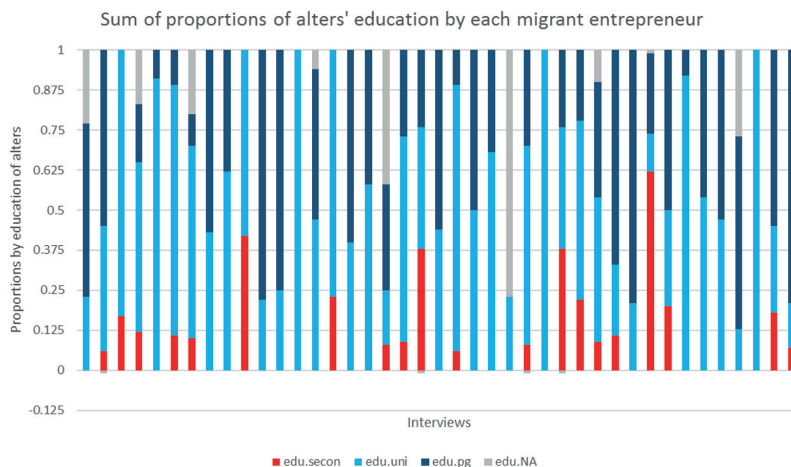


Figure 10 | Proportion of alters' education by each respondent

The high level of education of the business connections is connected to the high level of education of the migrant entrepreneurs. In Figure 11, the negative score on the Y-axis shows the tendency of migrant entrepreneurs to be surrounded by people with a similar level of education to themselves. People use similar others to create bonding experiences and a sense of belonging to a social class (M. Sloodman, 2018). In the data, entrepreneurs who declare that they are innovative show less homophily than those who declare to be less innovative. In other words, diversity of social connections is present in a minority group, while for the rest of the groups the connection to others with a different level of education is very restricted. The strong links become the channels to people with high levels of education, thus keeping the structure with connections among similar people.

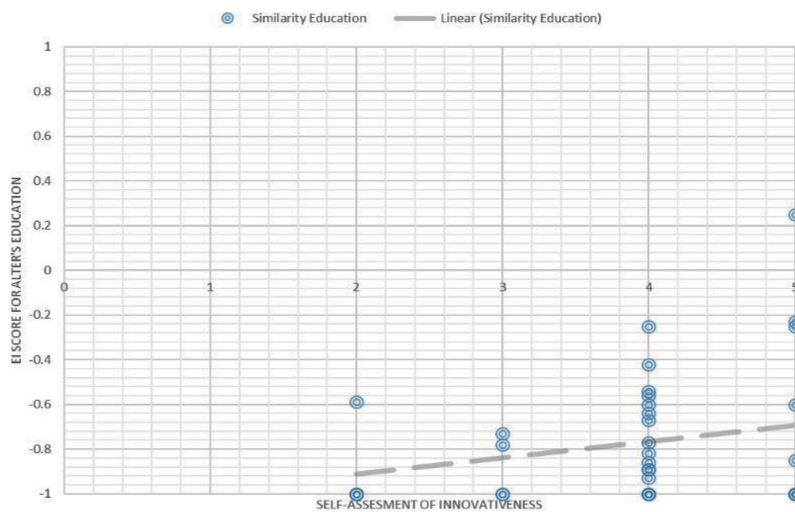


Figure 11 | Similarity of alters in terms of education

6.3.2 | Building bridges across nationalities

When migrant entrepreneurs introduce an innovation, their business connections advice or judge such economic actions. On average, from this group, alters sharing the same nationality as the respondent represent one third of the total connections, while another third corresponds to alters with Dutch nationality, and the last third to alters with another nationality (neither their own nor Dutch). Knowing that the respondents are first-generation migrants, those connections with a different nationality provide some information that differs from those contacts who share the same nationality. Figure 12 shows the composition of alters' nationality for each of the respondents.

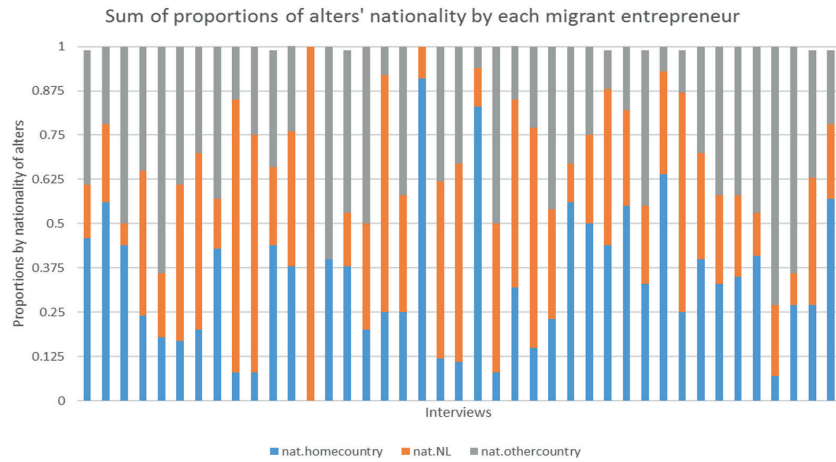


Figure 12 | Proportion of alters' nationality by each respondent

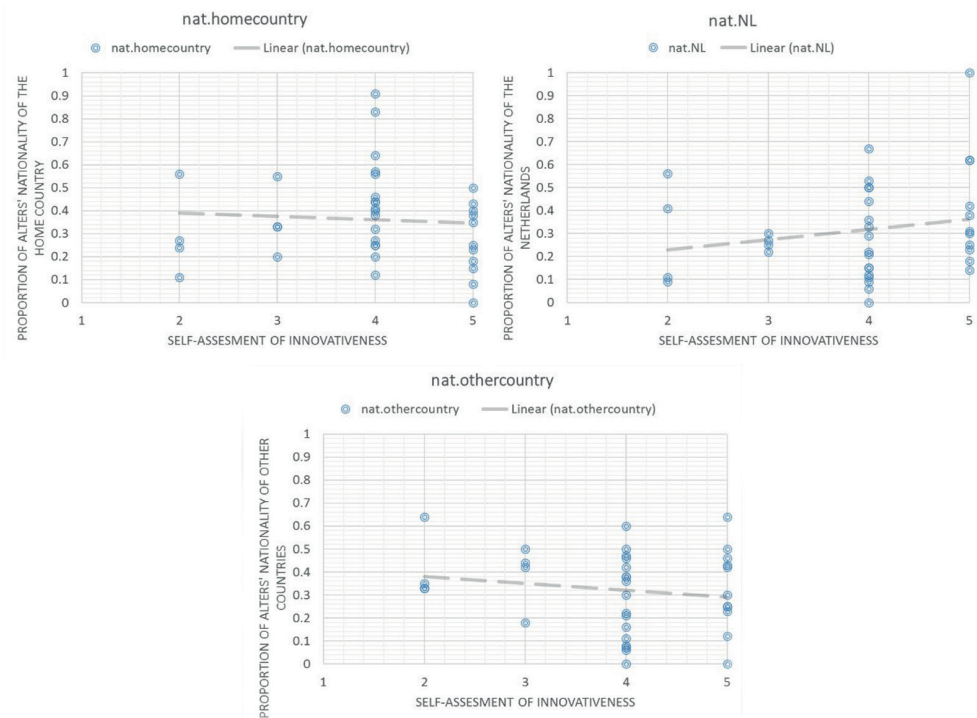


Figure 13 | Similarity of alters in terms of nationality

Contrasting the level of innovation to the proportion of each of the three categories of nationality gives as an outcome for the results shown in Figure 13. Those entrepreneurs described as more innovative show slightly less presence of business connections from their

home country, more connections with Dutch nationals and considerably fewer connections with other nationalities. Those differences suggest that the business innovation could go in line with more interaction with the local Dutch population, implying a process of feedback and adaptation to the local context. Those who show less innovation have connections attached to their country of origin and continue to receive similar advice that they would if they were in their own country. The presence of other nationalities is explained by the diversity of the social context in Amsterdam and the selection of the expat niche market. The lower presence of other nationalities in businesses with higher innovation is explained by a specialization of the target customer by the migrant entrepreneurs.

6.3.3 | Local and transnational interactions

Geographical places contribute to fostering closer contact, especially when there is personal interaction among people. The place of residence of ego and alters suggests that the interaction can also involve other relationships, such as being part of a club or meeting for food and drinks. Such social events contribute to the exchange of information among people, thus shaping the discussion about an economic innovation. Figure 14 provides the representation of the locations of alters among migrant entrepreneurs. The colour orange seems to be predominant, and in fact 7 out of 10 connections are also residents in the Netherlands, while the rest is divided almost equally among connections living in the country of origin and in another country.

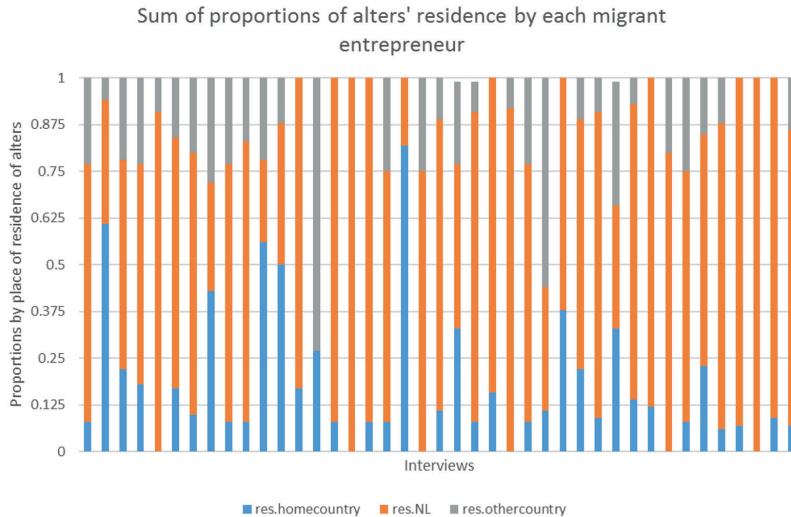


Figure 14 | Proportion of alters' place of residence by each respondent

Knowing that most of the business connections reside in the Netherlands, Figure 15 shows the relation with the level of innovation. Those entrepreneurs who affirm they are more innovative display a higher presence of connections who live in their country of origin, a slightly higher presence of connections residing in the Netherlands, and a lower presence of connections

residing in other countries. Those who display a lower level of innovativeness seem to be more oriented to keeping connections with people residing in other countries, perhaps because of multiple past migrations or because their contacts have moved to different locations. Comparing the presence of people residing in the Netherlands, the differences are very few, suggesting their connections are people with whom they are in personal contact and with whom they share other relationships besides business matters.

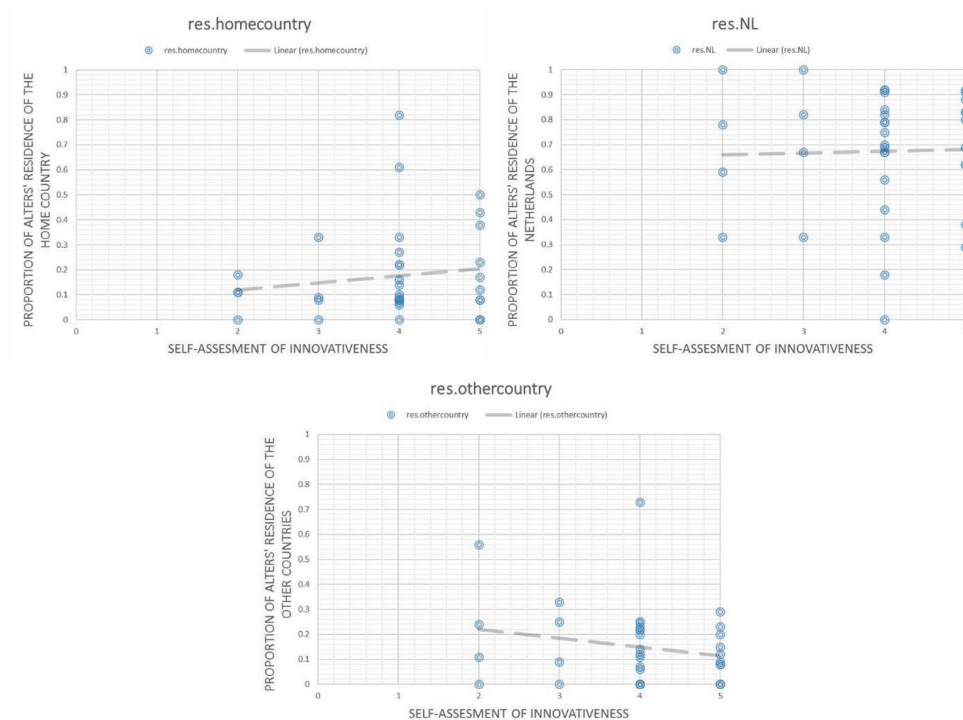


Figure 15 | Similarity of alters in terms of place of residence

6.3.4 | Tendency of similarity among business connections

The information collected from migrant entrepreneurs seems to give a larger importance to the connections with Dutch nationals, those living in the Netherlands and those with higher education. To get a better picture of the importance of similar or diverse connections, Figure 16 shows the relation between the EI score for nationality and place of residence. A relation with education is not presented because the tendency clearly pointed to homophily above the university degree. The results show the tendency that those entrepreneurs whose alters have a high degree of diversity in terms of nationality also correspond to those who have similarity in terms of living in the Netherlands. We know already that the contact with alters of Dutch nationality was noticeable among the group of diverse nationalities. Two ideal cases were chosen: case 133 with a higher score of innovativeness and case 128 with a lower score.

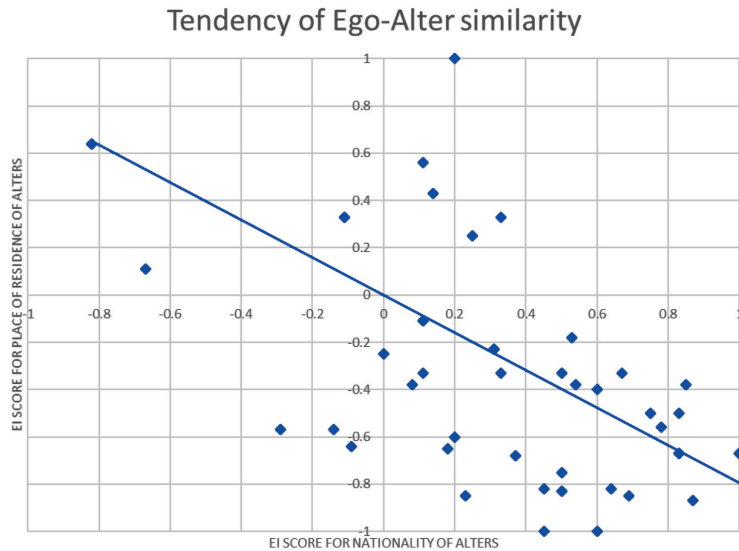


Figure 16 | Tendency of the similarity indexes of nationality and place of residence

6.3.5 | Innovativeness combining similarity and diversity

The combination of similarity and diversity is better illustrated with ideal cases. They make use of both features in the development and implementation of business ideas. The topic of connections, when creating innovative ideas, is facilitated by the languages used. As said before, English has become one of the main language for business in Amsterdam and the quotes below illustrate the way that migrant entrepreneurs use it to their advantage. To deal with formal relations with the public authorities, Dutch remains the language to arrange everything, as it does when activating the role of the media to inform the rest of the society about the economic ideas of their business. Overall, in the knowledge stage and to create awareness of an innovation in Dutch society, the local language is the key. Nevertheless, when it comes to the personal interaction with clients, the use of English and other languages is preferred. And because the target market for their services is the expat community and international businesses, then the presence on websites favours English.

With most of the clients it's mostly English, sometimes French or German but mostly English. But when you are dealing on the other side with authorities or local people it is in Dutch. Occasionally, with the tax authorities you can sometimes do things in English if it suits everybody better.

Interview Code 133

In business relations, it is hard to decide. Sometimes you can get people's attention better if you switch languages. When I talk with Dutch companies, sometimes they prefer English. Initially, we put this project on the internet but because we are in a Dutch network, we got a lot of Dutch people getting in touch with us. Now we are in the Dutch languages press. Because we are here, we are visible and we are in the network and we are meeting Dutch companies who introduced us to other Dutch companies. If you go to the internet it is English; if you go to the press and our networks it would be in Dutch.

Interview Code 128

The business connections helping with business ideas are shaped by previous life experience. Many of the contacts created in times when entrepreneurs studied or worked are used in the future for business purposes. Homophily plays an important role, as colleagues from studies or work have a similar level of education and possibly similar lifestyle. Communication between them flows better thanks to the trust built over the years, and friendship ties overlap with business initiatives. Given that those connections know each other from the past, complementarity becomes an important aspect to use in business: each can do their best at what they are good at. The cases below illustrate these arguments.

There is one I know in Canada for more than 30 years and he was also one of the people that I set up this network with. (...) It works both ways, we send as well as receive, they may be suppliers but we also give work to people in other countries as well. I know I can rely on him, I've worked with him lots of times and if I give him a job I know it will work.

Interview Code 133

Eventually I made my way back to Eindhoven and some of my friends from the international school were starting their company because they studied at the technical university. They need somebody to do all the communication around the software they were building, and I had that skill from my academic career: to listen to information. I studied anthropology and agricultural development and I worked in countries around the world in development projects. A mentor helped to define the product. He has a company in Holland so he could listen to our fantasy ideas and talk about the real world and ask questions.

Interview code 128

However, when it comes to the implementation of the business idea, the set of people expands a little bit. Those two processes are overlapping and it is difficult to put a boundary between them. The quote below shows the main reason for that: it is easier to implement with those who have thought about it.

[Ideas and implementation] are closely related and when you talk to somebody: can we do this? What shall we do there? Then you come out with something you make it concrete together. Usually once you have come out with the basic [idea] with somebody then you continue with them.

Interview Code 133

Working with those who also thought about an idea is complemented with the figure of being a migrant, and an international businessperson. To situate themselves at the edge between different target markets – Dutch, expat, international – pushes them to use their set of skills as an advantage. A commonly used feature is to present themselves as being unique in the local market. That uniqueness is connected to their educational credentials, work experience and country of origin. They have diplomas that show their expertise, they have years of experience working in their fields, and they have a command of English at the business level. The quotes below illustrate their use of those characteristics to stand out from the rest.

People always think you can't do anything, until you show you can do it better. And then everybody knows who you are. So you stand out because you are different. There was, at that time, only one other tax advisor who was British and had a degree in the Netherlands. So we were quite unusual, so to know somebody who also spoke English as a native speaker was quite useful at the time. People in the market knew that I was different.

Interview Code 133

Now we have both networks: we play to our advantage. Depending how the client is more comfortable. I try to leverage the fact that I have lived and worked in different countries. I look for a contact point with someone, so I use that. If I know anything about them, I talk about that place because there is a good chance that I have been there or worked there. So I use it to my advantage to have something in common.

Interview Code 128

The characteristic of the connections become really important in the way the businesses are shaped. It is known that new ideas come from other circles (Burt, 2004) while diverse people contribute to bringing those ideas (Granovetter, 2005). Migrant entrepreneurs use both strategies when it comes to relating with people from different nationalities and different places of residence. Figure 17 show the example of case 133 with low innovation who keeps a balance of contacts in the Netherlands as well as contacts in the European and American markets where he operates. A higher degree of similarity is shown in terms of nationality because all his European contacts come from the same country. Still, diversity is kept by keeping those connections isolated. People not knowing each other helps this entrepreneur to bring

new ideas which were implemented in the past while keeping some traditional ways of doing business in his particular sector.

Connections are located in:

- Orange = 40% in the Netherlands
- Blue = 50% in the rest of Europe (outside NL)
- Yellow : 10% in North America

But, considering the region of origin, the connections come from the Netherlands (20%), North America (20%) and Europe (60%)

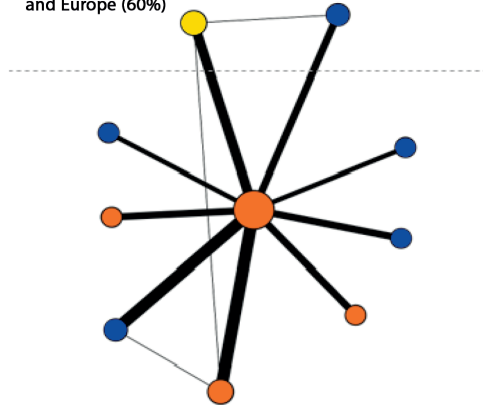


Figure 17 | Network visualization of Case 133

Connections are located in:

- Orange = 72% in the Netherlands
- Green = 14% in Asia
- Blue = 7% in North America
- Violet = 7% in the rest of Europe (outside NL)

But, considering the region of origin, they come from the Netherlands (29%), North America (21%), Asia (14%), Middle East (7%) and Europe (29%)

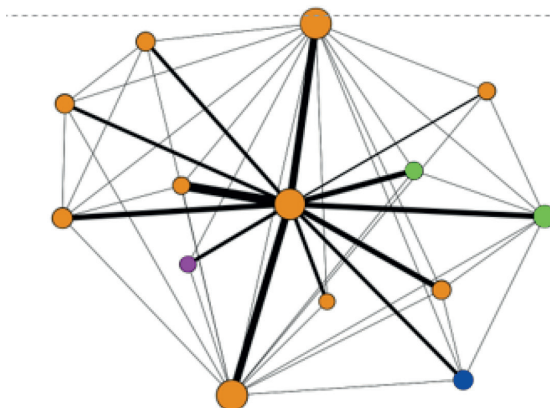


Figure 18 | Network visualization of Case 128

The example of case 128 in Figure 18 shows his priority of using connections from various countries of origin but working mainly in one geographical location. Furthermore, most of them know each other personally, which facilitates communication among them. This entrepreneur takes his network very seriously and promotes the relations among them at all levels. The novel ideas mainly come from the expertise of those people, each of them being an expert in a sector: technology, marketing, funding, mentoring and networking. The role of the entrepreneur is to be able to catch the signals from the communication between them and to transform that knowledge into business ideas.

6.4 | NETWORKS IN THE DECISION STAGE TO IMPLEMENT NOVEL BUSINESS IDEAS

The decision stage corresponds to the process of introducing an innovation or not in the market and the factors influencing that process. The (innovative) idea has been created and the adaptation of it to the local context involves the decision of the entrepreneur, and also suggestions coming from the connections around them. Those contacts have the advantage of being reliable, low cost and rich in information (Granovetter, 1985), and many entrepreneurs trust them to various degrees for personal and business topics (Rooks, Klyver, & Sserwanga, 2016).

The following sections use the information from the social contacts that entrepreneurs use in the decision stage. I use the data collected through the network concentric circles (Herz et al., 2014). Respondents mentioned others who supported their company and who provided complementary characteristics about them, known as attributes. The attributes of each connection matter because they can have an impact on the business ideas with experiences based on their sex, nationality, place of residence and age.

6.4.1 | Density of ego-networks

Overall, the 70 migrant entrepreneurs have on average 4 business connections, ranging from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 11. Density gives an approximation for the number of existing ties in comparison with the possible ties. In this group of 70 entrepreneurs, the ego-networks show a score of 0.62 on average, where a score of 0 means that alters do not know each other and where 1 means that all business connections know each other. As expected, the larger the number of alters for an entrepreneur, the lower the density, as shown by the dotted grey diagonal line Figure 19. There are two groups: the box containing the left side of that figure corresponds to the entrepreneurs who declared higher levels innovation in their businesses, and on the right side the rest of the entrepreneurs who declared a low level of innovation. The first group show a density score of 0.70, while the second group shows a density score of 0.59. In simpler words, migrant entrepreneurs with alters who are connected to each other show a higher perception of being innovative than those entrepreneurs whose alters are less connected to each other.

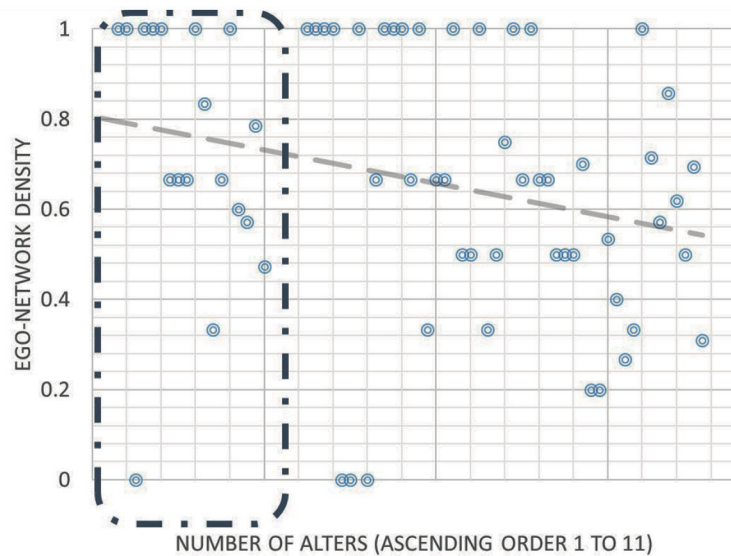


Figure 19 | Ego network density by the number of alters, in ascending order

6.4.2 | The formation of nationality niches

When people have the same nationality, there are certain common topics to talk about, and the possibilities to bond relations grow by sharing similar tastes and lifestyles. This generalisation becomes evident when the context of migration puts those people in the receiving locality, where they all face a context that is, to varying degrees, different from their country of origin. The formation of ethnic-based circles of people follow from those dyadic interactions, where besides common topics there is also the possibility to transfer resources, information and advice. The situation of entrepreneurs is represented with two ideal cases: A and B. Both were chosen because they declared having a high level of innovation, but whereas the network structure is small and unconnected for A, it is large and dense for B. The attribute of nationality is represented in Figure 20 with colours: yellow for the entrepreneur's nationality, red for Italian and blue other countries. The links between alters assume reciprocity and are based on the perspective of the entrepreneur.

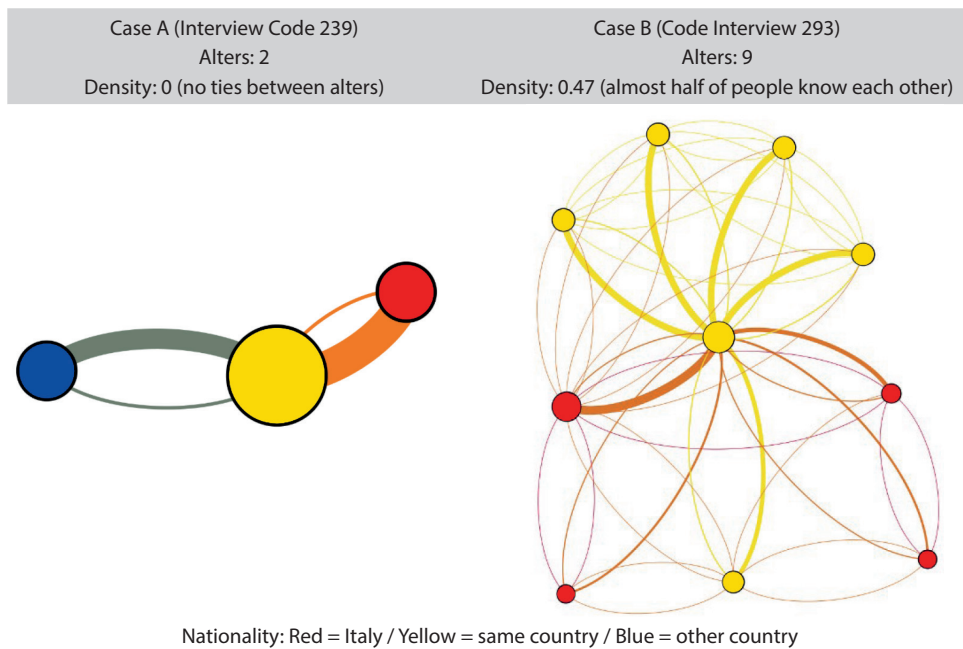


Figure 20 | Two ideal cases with nationality as an attribute

6.4.3 | The age gap

Age is one of the categories that was described by the entrepreneurs as being important because of expertise and advice, based on the experiences that older people have lived through. The average age is 23 years at the moment of leaving their country of origin. Part of that time has been spent in Italy and also part of that as entrepreneurs. At the age when the people just arrived in Italy, the search for advice from the same ethnic community included those with a higher position, older age and well connected in groups. This situation contributed to form small groups around older migrants who could provide necessary information.

These groups were also used for entrepreneurial purposes, but the lack of role models is evident when looking at the small number of connections used for businesses and the lack of experienced entrepreneurs. In the same manner as in the previous section, Figure 21 represents the attributes of age with colours: blue for the age of the entrepreneurs and those within 5 years of their age, with green for contacts of a younger age and orange or violet for contacts of an older age. Case A shows a total disconnection between the two existing connections: the business ideas are only implemented by the entrepreneurs themselves, without advice or mediation from others. Case B shows that many connections are involved in the business processes, many of which are of the same age and thus have similar life experiences to share with each other. The connections in a different age group contribute with psychological support, or are workers in the same company and thus have little impact on the implementation of business ideas.

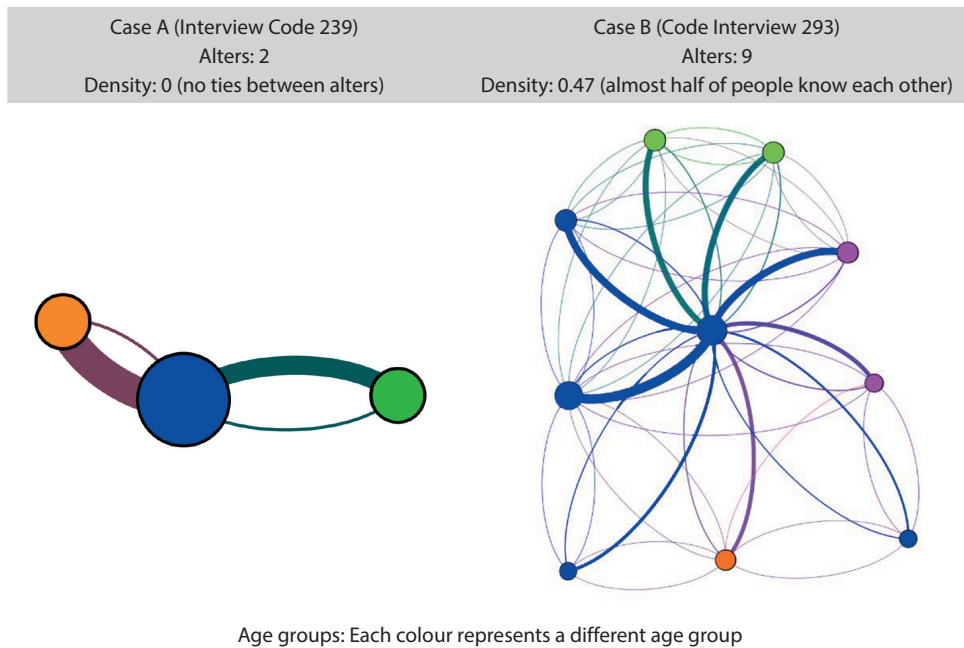


Figure 21 | Two ideal cases with age as attribute

6.4.4 | Sex factor in business

The formation of connections with people of the same sex showed results of homophily among the business connections, meaning that people of the same sex cluster together. The inclusion of people of the other sex in the implementation of business ideas goes along family ties, where parents and siblings are considered as providing important advice. The cases where female entrepreneurs had female role models or advisors in their circle of connections correspond to cases where families are running the business.

The representation of cases A and B in Figure 22 shows the colour green for male and violet for females. Here, both entrepreneurs are male and include females in part of the business initiative, namely hiring them as workers or hiring them for administrative work. More detailed information about the (un)intentional choice of selecting a male or female for a business needs to be explored, and this study did not have enough questions along these lines.

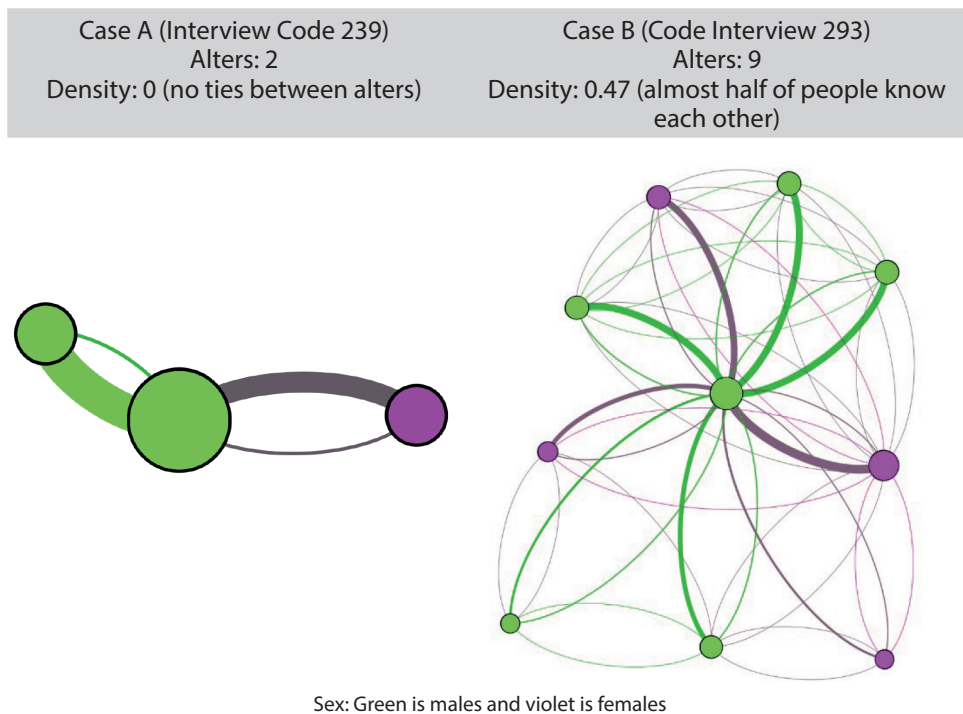


Figure 22 | Two ideas cases with sex as attribute

6

6.4.5 | Innovativeness in opposite ideal networks

When it comes to implementing the ideas, the decision of the entrepreneur is the most important. The main point of reference is the useful connections that are for business purposes, in this case for novel ideas being adapted. The figures in the previous sections presents two cases from the respondents to exemplify the composition of an ego-network with few alters but some innovation on the left side; and an ego-network with more alters and some innovation on the right side. In both cases, the explanation refers to the implementation of a business idea. Case A, as a tailor, has few contacts with other people in the workplace. There is a lot of connection with clients but from the point of view of the entrepreneur, they are not considered sources of ideas for the business. This person explains that new ideas are implemented on the basis of previous work experience and creativity, combining raw materials that are familiar because of having worked with them in the country of origin. Furthermore, the origin of some new ideas is an active use of digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat where the entrepreneur also advertises the completed clothing pieces. The diversity in this small ego-network is explained by the absence of ties between the two alters coming from two different worlds: one of them is Italian, male and older than the entrepreneur, while the other is from another country, female and younger than the entrepreneur. Both people play a major role in this business and are the main support network to carry out the daily tasks of administration and management.

Case B displays a larger number of alters, which is explained by the niche of this service, being the provision of English language lessons for people from Brescia. The organisation of the language school implies constant interaction among trainers as well as with students. The migrant entrepreneur stated that his novel ideas are usually implemented together with other people, and then they replicate teaching techniques, and use new books or digital technology that can be useful to the local market. The diversity in this network is given by the inclusion of business connections from the same country of origin as the entrepreneur mixing with Italian-born; also this person is surrounded by people who are younger, in different age groups; and the composition of males and females is almost fifty-fifty.

6.5 | CONCLUSION

There is one I know in Canada for more than 30 years and he was also one of the people that I set up this network with. (...) It works both ways, we send as well as receive, they may be suppliers but we also give work to people in other countries as well. I know I can rely on him, I've worked with him lots of times and if I give him a job I know it will work.

Interview code 133

The situation of the entrepreneur described in the quote shows the regularity with which migrant entrepreneurs experience a personal network in different geographical locations. The respondents explained the way they use the similar and diverse connections in their business, and more importantly, the role of those connections in the process of discovering novel ideas and the process of implementing business ideas. The implementation of an economic innovation among migrant entrepreneurs is guided by the combination of both diverse and homogenous personal connections.

The context played a role: Amsterdam allows contact with diverse people in the same urban location, and in Brescia people are connecting through associations and social activities. Within that frame, migrant entrepreneurs can let their skills work, in terms of knowledge awareness and knowledge decision. Also that context provides boundaries of where to look for elements outside: such as networks, context and products. The context of the countries of origin of the entrepreneurs influences the supportive function of the connections still living in that country. Those transnational connections contribute to the uniqueness of the services provided by the respondents, and at the same time, they inhibit a higher influence from connections of other countries.

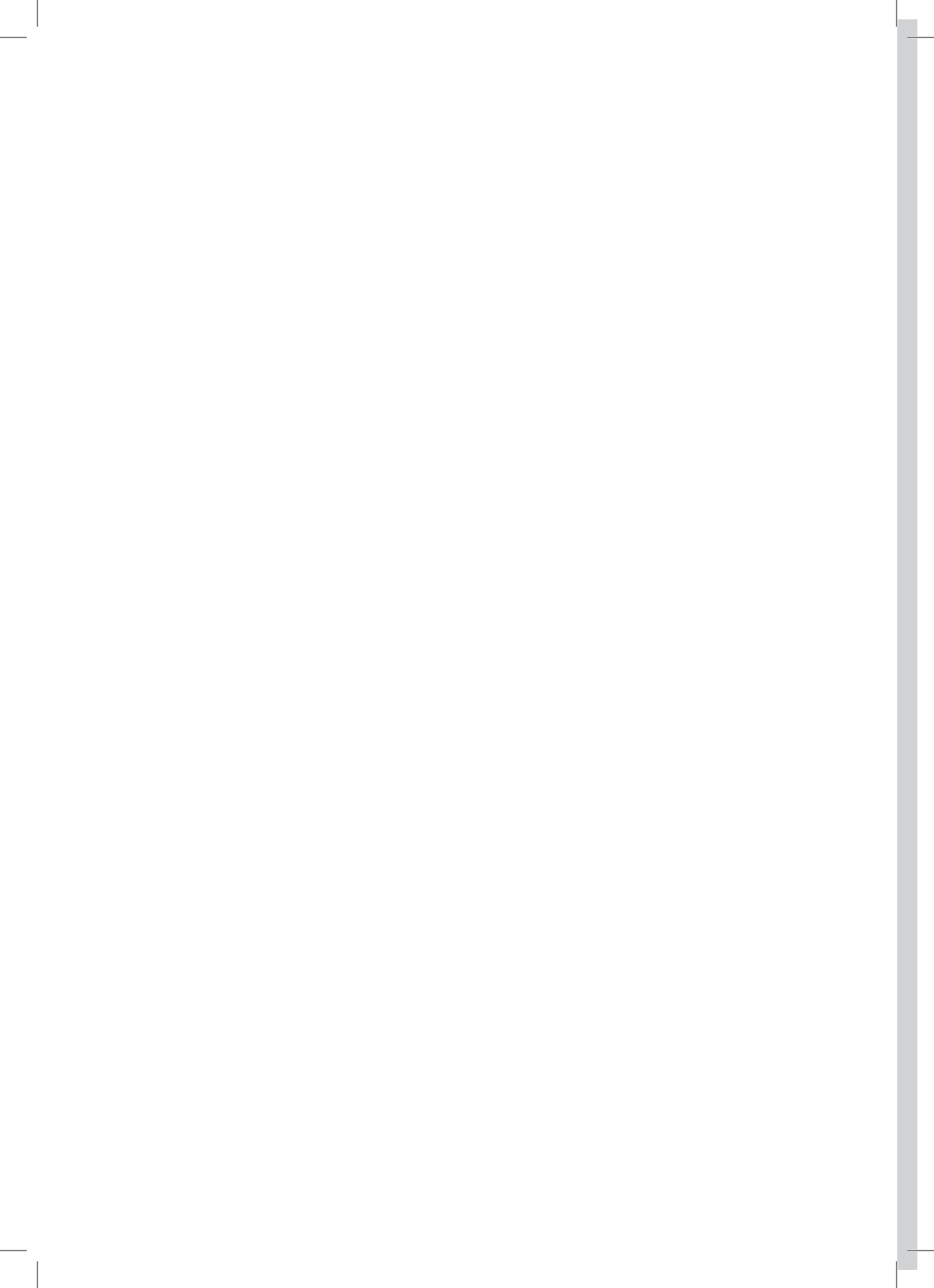
The use of ideal types provided a better explanation for particular cases. Business connections are useful when they provide information, resources and support to the business initiative, but it is crucial to know more about the details of the context where the business operates. Because that context provides legal, political and economic conditions for those business connections. At the same time, certain novel ideas are compatible with that context only.

Business connections, as mediators between the creation of novel business ideas and the implementation, function as magnets for other people to be part of an entrepreneur's connections. Those new actors bring new input for better adaptation of the business ideas or for the creation of new ideas. Some of those connections helped to adapt business ideas in the knowledge stage, meaning that they helped to shape the business ideas. Other connections contributed in the decision stage, contributing to the implementation of a business idea. Also, there were groups of people who rejected initial ideas and pushed for alternatives. The central function of business connections needs further exploration to look at the multiple roles of the same people, not only for business but also for other social relations, commonly partners, family and friends.

People consulted by migrant entrepreneurs were analysed in terms of their nationality, place of residence and level of education. Those connections are built in the past life experiences: family, education, migration and work. It has been proven that diverse connections are a necessary element to add something new to the market. This exploratory study in Amsterdam and Brescia supports the role of homogeneous connections in saving time and effort for entrepreneurs when developing and spreading their new business ideas. Further research at a larger scale needs to be carried out to provide further evidence that homogeneity and diversity are crucial for migrant entrepreneurs. The analysis of the characteristics of the alters showed that similar people converged in one point, the migrant entrepreneur, who processed the business ideas and implemented them in the context of the receiving location (Amsterdam or Brescia).

The large number of business connections was useful to provide diversity and similarity of ideas, which was collaborated further with the ideal cases. Some key contacts were those who provide diverse information and opportunities, in line with the interpretations of the network entrepreneur (Burt, 2000). In that same line, the position of migrant entrepreneurs permitted them to access other important bridges or important stakeholders (Burt, 2004) who allowed them to create expectation and business interest among groups. As a further contribution, similar contacts were used to re-affirm business ideas while providing a common language between them to understand those business initiatives. That process facilitated support from those similar connections in terms of specific advice and financial resources.

The limitation of the study of business connections is the lack of information from other connections that could play an important role. From the model of diffusion of innovation (Rogers, 2015), the role of media and of famous people is mentioned. Their effect is not considered for this study but could be incorporated in a further research. Another limitation is the selection of the attributes, those not collected in the interviews could also have a role, for example the quality of the educational credentials or the financial situation of the connections. There are considerable efforts when planning to enlarge the data collection for more attributes, as well as privacy issues of the respondent. Still, an improved method could include more attributes in the form of socio-economic variables.



CHAPTER 7

General Conclusion

This study focused on the intersection between innovation and entrepreneurship, looking specifically at the case of migrants and their path experiences translated into business ideas. As seen from the title and the introduction, the research looked at some elements in those businesses that are new, some that are adapted from other contexts, and others that are shaped by the entrepreneurs' interactions with people around them. The interviews with migrant entrepreneurs showed that opportunities and limitations are based on their individual characteristics and their business ideas, where novelties in their services are understood in relation to the context. In this section, I highlight the contributions of this study, and finally I suggest further research lines.

Migrant entrepreneurs are a unique case to explore novel business ideas because of their situation of having lived in at least two different contexts. Their adaptation processes are characterized by a diversity of paths, but the path leading to their migration implies the capability to look at the receiving local context with a different pair of eyes. The process of translating those life experiences into (innovative) business ideas has been receiving more and more attention in recent years, and it is in this line that this research makes a contribution. Previous research has pointed out that migrants are less familiar with the mainstream context in comparison to their native-born counterparts (Light, 2004); and the individual traits of migrants shaped in their countries of origin – or previous migration – and are not equal to those of the native-born (Ballarino & Panichella, 2015; Fullin, 2011). As a reminder, this research studied first-generation migrants with their personal characteristics, such as cultural background, education, work experience, social networks, languages skills and more.

The focus on the service sector proved to be a challenge when attempting to capture the details and measure tangible and intangible aspects of the products and the processes for creating those products. During the design of the research and the collection of information, migrant entrepreneurs provided useful and detailed descriptions of their services as well as their advantages of being in the niche market of their preference. Their personal characteristics provided them with useful traits in a specific time period that were matched with an opportunity in the market to use the unique set of available resources to introduce something new in the market.

7.1 | THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE STUDY

In the introductory chapter, I connected the main theoretical contributions of innovation and entrepreneurship with the approaches used in migration studies. The study of migrant entrepreneurs has put emphasis on the ethnic niche markets or on the economic disadvantages that migrants face in the receiving context, and has also paid attention to the connection between entrepreneurship and economic development. Migrant businesses using innovative practice or products as a business strategy have gained attention in the past years with the boom of digital and tech companies, when researchers looked at the role of technology transfer and the formation of diverse team in several countries (Bagwell, 2018; Hovhannisyan

& Keller, 2014; Hunt, 2011; Ladkin et al., 2016). Innovation, understood from a Schumpeterian tradition of looking for something new in the market (Schumpeter, 1947; Śledzik, 2013), was operationalized in terms of (technology-based) patents and scientific outcomes. Economic innovation, as something new in the market, was defined as incremental improvements or a disruptive new product (Ramella, 2015b). Over time, the study of innovation has expanded with the approach of the service sector where the relationship between provider and client is crucial (Kindström, Kowalkowski, & Sandberg, 2013; Miles, 2009).

The little attention given to the topic of innovation in the field of migration studies has resulted in scattered studies that have not provided a big picture of the processes that led migrants to introduce novel business ideas with their companies (Aliaga-Isla & Rialp, 2013; Dheer, 2018). The research questions were formulated to have a more comprehensive view of that situation. Each of the questions looked at one of the following aspects: (i) individual characteristics; (ii) ideas transformed in products; (iii) local context in the receiving societies; and (iv) the role of social connections. The following questions were proposed in Section 1.4:

- i) How do the individual characteristics of an entrepreneur play a role in the development of an idea into a business? The starting point of this study is to look at the process of adapting novel ideas from the lenses and capacities of the entrepreneurs themselves.
- ii) What are the features of the products and the production processes that migrant entrepreneurs develop for their business? This question aims to look at certain aspects of the products being offered in the market and their production: from those that show high levels of novelty to those showing mere replication.
- iii) What is the institutional and social context providing a local opportunity structure to promote or inhibit innovation among migrant entrepreneurs? With this question, the external conditions are taken into account as important factors that entrepreneurs need to live through.
- iv) What is the role of diverse/homogeneous business connections of migrant entrepreneurs in the development and implementation of innovative/replicative business ideas? With this last question, the influence of the closest social contacts to the entrepreneur is acknowledged.

Having migrant entrepreneurs as the central actors, their personal characteristics were used throughout all the chapters. The use of those characteristics allowed a categorization of entrepreneurs in reference to their business activities. The four main conditions were: a) the language, educational background or work experience in the places of migration and in the corresponding economic sector, b) the financial means being used for business purposes; c) the (diverse) social groups influencing the economic decisions taken; and d) the cultural practices included in their business initiatives.

Once the questions and main topics were formulated, a theoretical model was needed to guide the exploration of innovation in this study. The modules or *building blocks*, created with theoretical elements, are borrowed from the model of diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 2003) and the approach of mixed-embeddedness (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001; Kloosterman et al., 1999). Current research that points at specific topics connecting innovation and migration were used

to refine and expand the explanatory capacity of those theoretical elements, so they are used as examples when explaining the potential of each of the modular theoretical blocks. There is still room for improvement because different sectors of the economy have their own specificity that do not exist in other sectors. For the particular case of the study of the service sector, much attention is needed to look at the consumer side in the provision of services, suggesting that the contextual conditions become highly relevant.

The advantage of using existing theoretical contributions is the capacity to learn and engage in discussion with existing research. Chapter 2 provided a theoretical lens characterized by the modularity of the building blocks, providing set of concepts to be analysed together as one but also as separate units. The three building blocks are: a) the attributes of an innovation; b) the social context where it was introduced; and c) the network channels used for that purpose. Each of the building blocks was borrowed from existing theoretical approaches and provides a partial and complementary picture when explaining the situation of migrants introducing innovations in: their products, the processes of producing services, internal organisation of their companies or marketing strategies. All three blocks were matched with the individual characteristics of each migrant as the central socio-economic actor, to identify the potential and the limitations when looking at their human, social, cultural and financial forms of capital.

To fill the gap of research about innovation among migrant entrepreneurs, I used two empirical cases looking at the different aspects of the theoretical building block. In each of those cases, the collected information provided a deeper insight into the conceptual relationships of the theory. One case was looking at the *product & entrepreneurs* relationship, the other looked at *context & entrepreneurs*, and both looked at the relationship of *connections & entrepreneurs*. Novel ideas originated in the migratory experience are central to the empirical chapters and are complemented with the information available in each location.

7.2 | METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE STUDY

Chapter 3 provided an overview of the methods used and the validity of them. Given that each case aimed to explore complementing facets of the concepts, the design had to adapt two parallel, but cross-fertilized, processes of data collection and analysis of data. At the scale of the number of entrepreneurs interviewed (n=70 in Brescia and n=41 in Amsterdam), a rigorous process needed to be followed to design the data-collection tools and receive information that could be used later. Using the methodology of this study and the tools developed for data collection, a future replication to other geographical locations is possible as well as an expansion to larger populations using similar steps. Due to the nature of qualitative small-scale research, there is a limit to the generalization of empirical findings from this research to all cases of migrant entrepreneurs in each city. The advantage of choosing this method, as explained in the general introduction, consisted of the exploration of innovative business ideas and finding empirical evidence about those based on entrepreneurs' migratory experiences.

The interview guides, in Italian and in English, facilitated the collection of information on those topics, and the post-facto organisation of digital documents completed the database used in this study. In both empirical cases, attention for the wider opportunity structure remained central while the attributes of an innovation and the personal connections involved in the innovation-decision processes were explored. Information was identified in the migratory experiences influencing the business ideas, for example the expertise from their previous education, the customer service from previous work experience, the legitimacy of cultural practices or the safety net from family and friends. The boundary of the urban space combined with the national borders was used as a reference for where an innovation could be introduced, but information about connections in different locations was still asked. In that scenario, the assessment of the entrepreneurs about their entrepreneurial motivations, their position in the sector and their future perspectives was described. The use of open and categorical questions allowed the identification of tangible and intangible aspects of a service as novel and innovative, as well as aspects that were replicative from other contexts. The Oslo Manual and the inspiration of previous research was put into practice to identify possible measures of innovation in the service sector, based on self-assessment and cross-validation with related questions. Finally, concentric circles and network rosters helped in the identification of the existence and structure of social connections. The connected questions showed the changes over time in the entrepreneurs' relationships with people in their business, and also in personal matters.

This study was of a qualitative nature, because the details that needed to be explored could only be acquired with the use of in-depth questions and collecting the entrepreneurs' thoughts and experiences. Still, an extra effort was made to include descriptive statistics and network analysis. The combination of methods resulted in a more comprehensive use of the available information and a better presentation of the results with the use of graphics and ideal types. The inclusion of other methods could be a way to approach this topic of research using variables constructed from the categories used in the empirical chapters.

7.3 | EMPIRICAL EXPLORATION OF INNOVATION AMONG MIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS

The study of innovation had to be grounded in cases where the theoretical elements could be identified. Such an explanation of socio-economic phenomena was conducted in two locations. The choices of Brescia and Amsterdam followed conceptual, but also practical reasons, among them the need to find cases with few similarities to enlarge our understanding of this topic. Migrants, context, products and connections came from the data collection, and indeed they corresponded to two different realities. The effort to put them together included the polishing of the theoretical elements along the way with support from colleagues, researchers and other external feedback. The results have confirmed some initial expectations, but have also shown some surprises.

Chapter 4 is the first of the empirical chapters, and it features the attributes of innovation with the services described by migrant entrepreneurs in Amsterdam. Incremental innovation is evident when describing the adaptation of services with the five features: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability. By looking at migrant businesses as economic agents with the potential to bring diverse goods and services that a local population may not have, the entrepreneurs use their migratory experience to introduce diversity and novelties matching the needs of the niche market (Logan et al., 2002; Salaff et al., 2003). Most of those novel business ideas fall off the radar of patents or licenses because few of them can be registered as a copyright creation of the entrepreneurs.

As expected since the beginning of this research, the results of chapter 4 showed the difficulty of identifying and qualifying different elements of a business. The process of introducing new business ideas includes practices seen from the perspective of cultural changes, as well as practices from the perspective of national stereotypes and others from the barriers seen from the entrepreneur's position. The results showed that two aspects are new: the use of digital technology in the form of marketing innovation, and the use of cultural traits in the form of product innovation. In the case of Amsterdam and the expat niche, digital technology is widely used to reach those customers from the "expat community" who can contact entrepreneurs and communicate with them. The most important factor in this context was the provision of familiarity as part of the service, because cultural traditions are embedded in the way that entrepreneurs and customer interact. The way to provide such novelty is to use language skills, cultural traits and previous life experience such as migration. During the analysis, the use of cultural practices when migrant entrepreneurs position themselves in the market in an attempt to gain a share of the clients is evident, sometimes in the segments with their own ethnic group or other migrant groups, and sometimes the mainstream Dutch segment.

In that same chapter, the contextual conditions were described with the facilities to create and maintain an English-language based segment of the market. The fact that many international headquarters of companies are located in the region, and English is a main language for business, implies that customers have an incentive to pay for specific services. At the same time, the local context is open to recognizing the credentials shown by the high levels of education and training that this wave of migrants has. Such a situation is also favourable to a preferable treatment in terms of registration for businesses, taxes and legal status. The focus of migrant entrepreneurs using innovation is to provide (digital) services to other similar migrants, to extend to an international market and to focus on those willing to pay for a culturally diverse experience. Cultural adaptation and language advantages are used to introduce new services into the market, bringing the use of technological advances and digital tools closer to customers. The use of cultural differences, for the case of Amsterdam in the higher end of the market, becomes part of the adaptation of a new service to a local market.

Continuing to chapter 5, the case of Brescia in Italy examined the businesses of migrant entrepreneurs in relation to the conditions of the context where they operate. The individual characteristics of their services showed that they targeted the mainstream local market, and compete with other local entrepreneurs. Migrants aim to gain local customers by using the

Italian language for business purposes and competing against other local service providers. Also, the dispersion of immigrant communities in the region generated a small demand for their services among other people with the same ethnic origin; thus the exchange of resources, information and advice is weak, with a very limited number of collaborators for their economic initiatives. Additionally, migrant entrepreneurs use their time for other activities that facilitate the individual adaptation of their human, social, financial and cultural capital to the receiving society; their business activities struggle and survive on a small scale. The conditions of the context prevent migrant entrepreneurs from introducing new services into this local market because there is no incentive, funding or advantage for their business. The entrepreneurial information available on websites and in public offices targets locals who are aware of the bureaucratic processes to navigate those labyrinths.

As part of the contextual explanation, the migratory waves of recent decades meant a stronger presence of migrants in the province of Brescia, with the consequent formation of small groups with some incipient forms of collaboration. The marginal number of business connections between migrants and locals does not favour the creation of face-to-face communication channels to bring information from the experience of migrants that could be novel for locals. Instead, Facebook or WhatsApp groups are used to exchange information about prices, providers and regulations. Overall, the context of Brescia, despite having support programmes for innovation, does not offer particular incentives for foreigners who want to introduce innovative practices in the region.

Finally, chapter 6 looked at the personal connections of entrepreneurs with the message that both similar and diverse networks are needed, the former to develop strong and solid ideas and the latter to test and implement those ideas. Diversity, at least theoretically, is recognized as a main component of innovation when it refers to the introduction of new goods or services in a market (Asheim & Gertler, 2006; Herstad, 2017; Rogers, 2003; Schumpeter, 1947; Śledzik, 2013). Each case was asked to describe the business connections that were used during the creation and implementation of business ideas: the knowledge stage and the decision stage. They provided a large pool of individuals with whom they are embedded in a wider context, in geographical locations larger than the city only. At the same time, they were asked about the contextual conditions to match the conditions to operate their businesses and their target customers.

In the knowledge stage, the interviews in the cases of Amsterdam show favourable conditions for the creation of innovative ideas. Migratory experiences contribute to the creation of networks with similar people who are connected with them, with high levels of education, adequate work experience, and sufficient financial means. Besides, their advantageous position in the local market contributed to the creation of links with business contacts in the (Dutch) local population. In particular, the business connections used to create innovative business ideas show signs of diversity in terms of nationality and place of residence but similarity in terms of education and gender. Business connections used in the implementation of ideas follow similar patterns but with a larger inclusion of local connections who contribute to adapting the ideas to the local market.

In the decision stage, the interviews from the case of Brescia show constraints to implement innovative ideas. The number of connections did not play an important role, but the composition of the alters did. Nationality, age and sex were attributes described when talking about the influence that those connections had on entrepreneurs' decisions. The findings point at connections with the same cultural background and same sex, but who are younger than the entrepreneur. Additionally, the relations of alters with the entrepreneur was usually inferior in the job hierarchy because they were workers or hired for specific tasks. The lack of experienced connections and experts in the entrepreneurs' networks was one of the factors limiting them from adopting innovative practices, and to instead go for practices that replicate the competition.

To conclude, the diffusion of innovation could be seen as a business strategy of migrant entrepreneurs in conducive contextual conditions. The introduction of new services could have intended consequences, such as high revenues for the entrepreneur, the improvement of customers' quality of life or a better way of doing things. At the same time there are unintended consequences such as the replacement of less efficient, but traditional, niches or the adaptation of cultural traits for the customers. The analysis of the context is crucial to determine whether an innovation is a desirable business strategy for the local political and institutional actors. For further studies, the above-mentioned factors ought to be considered when looking at the incorporation of migrant entrepreneurs in local economies.

7.4 | FURTHER RESEARCH

Each of the chapters mentioned limitations in the applicability of the theoretical building blocks, the methodology and the empirical information. In summary there are five main limitations to this study. The first one is the applicability of the theoretical model because it includes a large amount of elements that are costly and time-consuming to repeat for smaller scale projects. The suggestion is to use one of the building blocks as a theoretical guide to further explore the aspects concerning that topic. The second limitation is the availability of information about novel products and novel practices in businesses, not only those run by migrants, but overall. Because of continuous changes in the companies and changes in society, novel business ideas are disappearing off the market or being incorporated in the mainstream. The third limitation referred to the creation of a larger database of (migrant) entrepreneurs who provide a better picture of the services they provide and the new aspects in their business. Efforts at measuring innovation at a European level are moving in that direction but are still far from reaching some of the typical aspects of SMEs. A fourth limitation is the generalization to other economic sectors, or to particular ethnic segments. The findings are based on the number of interviews conducted. A possibility for enlarging the database would be to include more sub-sectors of services with the consequent possibility to find patterns to better understand their situation. The fifth limitation is the language factor where the nuances that interviewees could have in

their mother tongue are not grasped when conducting interviews in Italian or English; a further use of various languages could enrich the explanations provided by migrant entrepreneurs. Based on those limitations, there are topics that could potentially become further research. I suggest three main points using the strengths of this study. The first is the flexibility and openness of the theoretical building blocks. The second is the strength of the methodological tools developed for this research, as they can be expanded to different contexts and different economic sectors. The third point is the identification of two aspects for large-scale studies.

In the first point, further studies could use the existing structure of blocks to accommodate them in empirical cases. The theoretical elements could be expanded to include topics such as the co-ownership of businesses or the different levels of the contextual scenario. For this study, those elements were not explored, but the flexibility of the existing model allows the inclusion of more variables in the operationalization of the concepts. The block of the individual characteristics could include the interaction between two or more owners as the agents of innovation, expanding the model with literature from organisation studies and the formation of teams (Chae, 2012; Hwang & Powell, 2005; Krackhardt & Stern, 1988; Thornton & Ocasio, 2005). Policy recommendations and scientific groups are being formed under the assumption that a diverse and productive team is able to develop novel approaches or novel products, so the study on the topic of business ideas could be coupled with the existing model as a new building block.

The second point is about methodology. Further studies could replicate the existing tools that were developed for this study, in particular the interview guides and the data management plan. The questions for the interview guide were able to provide the necessary information to understand the opportunities for and limitations to innovation. Also, they are valid for the study of migrants because the guide includes a section looking at the collection of experiences based on migratory episodes. The reuse of the existing tools could apply to other locations, to look for contextual factors where migrants are interacting and to find barriers that migrants face when introducing something new. Additionally, the tools can be applied to the study of a particular group with the same ethnic origin by using the section on the educational and work background as the common ground to find similarities. Finally, the tools can also be applied to the study of entrepreneurs whose parents were migrants, i.e. second generation, because the type of questions go in line with topics interesting for that literature (Rusinovic, 2008; M. W. Sloodman, 2014; Zhou & Portes, 1993).

Finally, this study could contribute to two aspects: the future of the business and the combination of diverse and homogeneous connections. The future of the business is an aspect that needs a longitudinal approach to look at changes over time, and it also concerns the survival of those migrant businesses over time. Frugality and business failure are commonly present in the introduction of novelties in the market (Knorringa, Peša, Leliveld, & van Beers, 2016; Sarkar, Echambadi, Agarwal, & Sen, 2006). A longitudinal study of the survival rates, the causes of failure or the strategies for recovery are among possible topics for further research. There are few studies in that field where theoretical ideas suggest that the resilience built after a failure is a fuel for entrepreneurs to do things better in their future business and also

an incentive to make fewer mistakes in the products, organisation or marketing of their new company (Shepherd, Wiklund, & Haynie, 2009; Ucbasaran, Shepherd, Lockett, & Lyon, 2013; Ucbasaran, Westhead, Wright, & Flores, 2010). The second aspect is the influence of diverse and homogeneous networks in the decision of the entrepreneur, because the social relations need a better description of the weight of sentimental proximity (Bird & Wennberg, 2016), or the distortion of the communication channels and messages due to geographical distance or status (Nathan, 2015; Nathan & Lee, 2013; Van der Gaag, Snijders, & Flap, 2012).

Annexes

ANNEX 1 | DATA MANAGEMENT PLAN



UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM

Data Management Plan

Researcher	Juan Francisco Alvarado Valenzuela
Researcher ID	ORCID 0000-0001-6520-2883
Project title	Something new, something used, something borrowed: Innovation of migrant entrepreneurs in the service sector.
Project description	Project proposal in November 2014 and Update in June 2015
Project duration	<i>November 2014 – November 2018</i>
Funder(s)	NASP with PhD scholarship of UNIMI-UNIBS UvA with research funds Fondazione Franceschi Onlus with research grant
Related documents	<i>e.g. project proposal</i>

Data creation/collection

<p>1. Will you be using existing sources of data?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No </p>
<p>If so, what existing sources of data will be used?</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Own/group previous research <input type="checkbox"/> Publicly available database/archive <input type="checkbox"/> Academic collaborators <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist commercial data provider <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial collaborators <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) </p> <p>• <i>Brief description of data to be reused and its relevance.</i></p>
<p>If not, how will the data be collected?</p> <p>Two geographical location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interviews to migrant entrepreneurs invited from an existing database of the Chamber of commerce of Brescia, Italy - Interviews to migrant entrepreneurs found in web sources and providing services in Amsterdam, The Netherlands -

UvA DMP-template v1.0. Adapted from: Cope, J., 2013. *University of Bath Data Management Plan Template*. <http://opus.bath.ac.uk/36360/>

2. What are the characteristics of the data?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Qualitative | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Audio |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quantitative | <input type="checkbox"/> Video |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Table (e.g. SQL, Excel) | <input type="checkbox"/> Software source code |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Raster (e.g. NetCDF/OpeneNDAP) | <input type="checkbox"/> Computational model output |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Textual | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Images | |

File format(s): raw data in paper, databases in Excel and Word

Software required: UCINET-Gephi/Microsoft Office/Microsoft Excel

3. Who are or will be the (co-)owners of the copyright and intellectual property of the data?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University of Amsterdam | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist commercial data provider |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funder(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other third parties (i.e. not direct collaborators) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic collaborators | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial collaborators | |

4. How will the quality of the data be guaranteed?

- *Questionnaire was tested to gather useful data for this project*
- *Weekly meetings with research assistants in Brescia*
- *Creation of the database in Brescia and Amsterdam and double check with existing physical interviews with the input of information*
- *Backups every week for the existing documents in external memory drives / FileSend for sensible raw information exchanged between Brescia and Amsterdam*
- *Storage in two external drives*

Data management, documentation and curation**5. What will be the primary storage medium and location?**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> University network drive (P: drive) | <input type="checkbox"/> Secure facility of data provider |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University home drive (H: drive) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Physical storage (e.g. filing cabinet) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Departmental network storage | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

6. How will files and folders be named?

C:/EMI/Interviews/Code.xlsx or code.docx

Individual Code: there is a code starting with 100 for Amsterdam-based cases and another code starting with 200 for Brescia-based cases

7. How will the data be described and documented?	
<input type="checkbox"/> With a 'read me', codebook or similar file stored with the data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> By embedding information in data files themselves
<input type="checkbox"/> With specialist software (e.g. electronic lab notebook)	<input type="checkbox"/> Using paper documents (e.g. notebook) with cross-referencing
<input type="checkbox"/> Via an article in a data journal	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
8. How will file versioning be managed?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Unnecessary (i.e. overwrite original file)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated version control software (please specify)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Date/version number in filename/folder	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> 'Track changes' feature in software	
9. What metadata standard and metadata format will be used?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Generic metadata standard (e.g. Dublin Core)	<input type="checkbox"/> Resource Description Framework format (e.g. RDF/XML)
<input type="checkbox"/> Specialised metadata standard (e.g. Data Documentation Initiative)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other format (please describe briefly)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other metadata standard (please describe briefly)	
10. How will non-digital data be catalogued, described and stored?	
<input type="checkbox"/> No non-digital data used	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photography of physical artefacts
<input type="checkbox"/> On-campus storage (e.g. fireproof safe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Scanning of paper documents
<input type="checkbox"/> Off-campus storage	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)

Data security

11. What is the nature of any security requirements?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The data stored in the PC is secured by a personal code</i> <i>The data stored in the external drives is secured by a code to access the conten</i> <i>The data in paper is stored at the Archive of the UvA</i>
12. What are the main risks to data security?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The hack of the security codes where the data is stored</i> <i>The loss of digital databases due to informatic failure</i> <i>The loss of physical external drives with the information</i> <i>The loss of the physical archives of the UvA due to unforeseen circumstances</i>

13. What measures will be taken to comply with requirements and mitigate risks?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access restrictions on storage | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Encryption |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoidance of third-party storage (e.g. Dropbox) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Data processing (e.g. anonymisation) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical security | <input type="checkbox"/> Secure deletion/destruction |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

14. To whom will access be granted/restricted?

- *Linda Alengoz when the process of data collection is being carried in Brescia*
- *Flaminio Squazzoni (read-only) / Jan Rath (read-only) as the supervisors of the research project*

15. How will resilience be guaranteed?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Master copy stored on University network storage | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (describe backup strategy) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular backup/sync to University when offsite | |

Data archival and preservation**16. What data must be retained, for how long and in what format?**

List each type/class of data with how long it should be kept and the format in which it will be archived long-term. If this is not possible, summarise the criteria you will use to select data for retention.

Type/class of data	Retention period	Archival format
Interview originals	From collection to 10 years later.	Paper
Interview recordings		MP4
Interview transcripts	Paper will be stored as personal files of the researcher	Word doc
CSV files for each interviewee		CSV file
CSV files for Egos at each location	Digital files will be stored in copies at the universities and the grant foundation	CSV file
Gephi files		Gephi files
R script		Text file
Mendely reference		Account of Mendeley

17. How will long-term preservation be assured?



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deposit in data centre/data archive (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Submission to specialist database (please specify)	
18. What metadata/documentation must be deposited with the data?	
<input type="checkbox"/> Information on provenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Technical information about files
<input type="checkbox"/> Circumstances of data collection	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Codebook, list of abbreviations, description of variables etc.	
19. Who will have long-term responsibility for the data after the project ends?	
<input type="checkbox"/> External archive, data centre or database	<input type="checkbox"/> Publisher
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University data repository	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)

Data publication and access

20. Do you have an obligation or intention to publish/share your data?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
21. What secondary use is intended or foreseeable?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further use by original researchers	<input type="checkbox"/> Meta-analysis
<input type="checkbox"/> Combination with other data	<input type="checkbox"/> General reference
<input type="checkbox"/> Reanalysis using novel methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
22. What difficulties are expected in sharing?	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality	<input type="checkbox"/> Intended commercialisation
<input type="checkbox"/> Ownership/licensing	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Large file size	
23. What data will/will not be published as outputs from the project?	
Will publish/share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anonymized dataset of the variables in excel • Anonymized Text files 	Will not publish/share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal information to identify respondents • Addresses and contact details

24. How will potential users discover the data/metadata?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well-known specialist database | <input type="checkbox"/> Email to corresponding author |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data access statement in published articles | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal networking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federated data search | <input type="checkbox"/> Data citation (e.g. via DOI) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal/research group web page | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |

25. How will continued access be guaranteed?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copy in personal/group archive | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preserved in archive/data centre | |

26. When will the data be published?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immediately on collection | <input type="checkbox"/> To coincide with publication of main results |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Within 3 years of collection | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Within xx time of project end date (please specify) | |

27. What license conditions and other restrictions will apply?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public domain (e.g. CC0) | <input type="checkbox"/> MIT license |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open license (e.g. Creative Commons) | <input type="checkbox"/> Terms negotiated with requestors as needed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attribution required | <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative charge for access |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Share-alike required | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-commercial use only | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GNU Public License | |

Roles, responsibilities and resourcing**28. Which named roles or individuals have specific data management responsibilities?**

- *Compliance to regulations of the UNIMI-UNIBS PhD doctoral program*
- *Data Steward of the AISSR PhD Program – UvA*

29. What relevant policies at the University of Amsterdam and partner institutions apply?



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> University of Amsterdam Research Data Management policy <input type="checkbox"/> University of Amsterdam IT Security policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funder research data management policy <input type="checkbox"/> Personal/group/department research data management policy (please provide link) <input type="checkbox"/> Partner institution data management policy (please provide link) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	
30. How will adherence to this plan be checked and/or demonstrated? <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Interim report to funder <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final report to funder </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability to research participants <input type="checkbox"/> Peer review </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Annual review with partners <input type="checkbox"/> Committee/steering group oversight </div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quarterly review at research group meeting <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) </div>	
31. When will implementation of this plan be reviewed and by whom? <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Principal investigator <input type="checkbox"/> External partners </div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research group/project team <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) </div> <input type="checkbox"/> Project steering group	
32. What resources will be required to implement this plan? <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Professional data entry/processing/analysis <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Up to 1TB research storage (provided free) </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated staff time for data management/curation <input type="checkbox"/> More than 1TB research storage (discuss with ICTS and include in project budget) </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Additional training for research team <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) </div>	

ANNEX 2 | INTERVIEW GUIDE IN ITALIAN

Progetto di Ricerca in Imprenditorialità, Migrazione e Innovazione
 Programma di Dottorato in Economic Sociology
 Università di Brescia UNIBS – Università di Milano UNIMI – University of Amsterdam - UvA

Codice:

Codice del
raccomandante:

PARTE I: DOMANDE SULL'AZIENDA

I_A	INFORMAZIONI SULL'AZIENDA	
I_A1	Nome dell'azienda	
I_A2	Data di fondazione	Quando ha avuto inizio la vostra azienda? I_A2a Mese di fondazione I_A2b Anno di fondazione
I_A4	Attività Principale dell'impresa	
I_A5	Percezione personale del livello di innovazione	Seguendo la seguente scala, quanto è innovativa la sua compagnia? 1. Per niente innovativa 2. Poche delle nostre attività sono innovative 3. Alcune delle nostre attività sono innovative 4. Molte delle nostre attività sono innovative 5. Tutte le nostre attività sono innovative
I_A6	Settore Economico	
I_A7	Area geografica principale di attività	La sua attività principale si svolge in (SI/NO, possibili più risposte): I_A7a Brescia città I_A7b Brescia provincia I_A7c Altre province in Lombardia/Nord Italia I_A7d Altre regioni d'Italia I_A7e Altri paesi dell'Europa
I_A8	Soci (incluso l'intervistato)	Ci sono altri soci dell'azienda?
I_A9	Numero di succursali	
I_A9a	Posizione geografica delle succursali	1. 0 2. 1 3. 3 4. Brescia 5. EU
I_A10	Numero di dipendenti	I_A10a Numero totale dei dipendenti I_A10b Numero di dipendenti con meno di 30 anni I_A10c Numero di dipendenti donne I_A10d Numero di dipendenti provenienti dallo stesso paese di origine dell'intervistato I_A10e Numero di dipendenti italiani

Quanto ti senti vicino a quella persona?
1: molto vicino
5: molto distante

Puoi dirci quali persone si conoscono tra di loro collegandole con una freccia

Vicino al numero della persona, aggiungi il numero più accurato possibile di volte che vi siete incontrati lo scorso anno

Per ogni dubbio non esiti a chiedere. Grazie per la cooperazione.

5
4
3
2
1
IO

I_B	IMPRENDITORIALITA'													
I_B1	Motivazioni che ti hanno portato ad avviare l'attività	I_B1a Quale è stata la motivazione principale che ti ha spinto ad avviare l'azienda? I_B1b Come hai selezionato il tipo di attività?												
I_B2	Lista di 5 prodotti o servizi principali offerti	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>I_B2a Prodotto o servizio</th> <th>I_B2b Breve descrizione</th> </tr> <tr><td>1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td></td></tr> </table>	I_B2a Prodotto o servizio	I_B2b Breve descrizione	1		2		3		4		5	
I_B2a Prodotto o servizio	I_B2b Breve descrizione													
1														
2														
3														
4														
5														
I_B6	Selezione della posizione geografica	Come hai scelto il luogo in cui avviare la tua attività?												
I_B7	Disponibilità di precedenti esperienze	Quale esperienza di lavoro era necessaria per iniziare l'attività?												
I_B8	Disponibilità di particolari competenze	Quale preparazione specifica veniva richiesta per avviare l'azienda?												
I_B9	Rispetto dei regolamenti governativi	Quale regolamento governativo (locale e nazionale) è stato il più complicato per iniziare la vostra azienda?												
I_B10	Livello di competizione	Come descriverebbe la concorrenza esistente di attività simili alla sua?												

I_E	CAPITALE FINANZIARIO	
I_E1	Accesso a prestiti (semi) formali	L'anno scorso la vostra azienda ha ricevuto prestiti da istituzioni formali?
I_E2a	Istituzioni (semi) formali	Da chi ha ricevuto questi prestiti? (possibili più risposte) 1. Istituzione pubblica 2. Banca 3. Cooperativa di credito 4. Obbligazioni o titoli 5. ONG (etnica, religiosa, comunità) 6. Altro
I_E3	Accesso a prestiti informali	L'anno scorso, avete ricevuto prestiti da fonti informali (amici, parenti, conoscenti, ecc?)
I_E4a	Fonti informali	Da chi ha ricevuto questi prestiti? (possibili più risposte) 1. Finanziatore 2. Proprietario 3. Famiglia 4. Amici 5. Conoscenti 6. Altro
I_E5	Accesso alle garanzie	L'anno scorso, avete ricevuto qualche tipo di garanzia per i vostri prestiti o investimenti?

I_E6	Classe di Capitale	Qual'è il capitale della tua azienda (Euro)? 1. 0-5.000 2. 5.000-10.000 3. 10.000-50.000 4. 50.000-100.000 5. 100.000-250.000 6. 250.000-500.000
I_E7	Valore della produzione	Qual è il valore che è stato prodotto di beni o servizi, registrato lo scorso anno? 1. 0-100.000 2. 100.000-500.000 3. 500.000-1.000.000 4. 1.000.000-2.000.000 5. 2.000.000-5.000.000

I_F	INNOVAZIONE	
I_F1	Innovazione di prodotto o servizio	La sua azienda ha introdotto un nuovo bene o servizio lo scorso anno? Dare una descrizione. <i>(In caso negativo, passare alla domanda I_F4).</i> I_F1a Bene I_F1b Servizio
I_F2	Motivo dell'innovazione	Quale è il motivo principale per introdurre un nuovo bene o servizio? hai vissuto una situazione particolare che vi motivano a innovare?
I_F3	Effetto sulle vendite	Quanto delle vendite attuali sono l'effetto dell'introduzione di tale prodotto? 1. 0-25% 2. 25-50% 3. 50-75% 4. 75-100% 5. Non risponde
I_F4	Innovazione di processo di produzione	I_F4a La vostra azienda ha introdotto nuovi metodi (nuova tecnologia o nuovo software) di produzione di beni e servizi? <i>(In caso negativo, passare alla domanda I_F8).</i> I_F4b Quale?
I_F5	Innovazione nei metodi di distribuzione	I_F5a La vostra azienda ha introdotto nuovi metodi di distribuzione o di consegna per i prodotti e i servizi che offrite? (per esempio consegna a domicilio con la bici o una conferenza su internet). I_F5b Quale?
I_F6	Innovazione nell'attività di supporto	I_F6a La vostra azienda ha introdotto un'attività di supporto per il acquisto di materiali (nuove machine, software, sistemi di acquisto informatico)? I_F6b Quale?

I_F7	Motivo dell'innovazione	I_F7a Esiste un motivo principale per l'introduzione del nuovo processo? Ha vissuto una situazione particolare che vi motivano a innovare? I_F7b Quale?
I_F8	Innovazione organizzativa nell'azienda	I_F8a La vostra azienda ha cambiato la struttura interna, come dirigenti e dipendenti? <i>(In caso negativo, passare alla domanda I_F12).</i> I_F8b Come? È un modello più gerarchico o più orizzontale?
I_F9	Innovazione nella responsabilità dei dipendenti	I_F9a la vostra azienda ha cercato nuove forme di delegare la responsabilità di lavoro dei dipendenti? I_F9b In che modo?
I_F10	Innovazione nelle relazioni con i partner esterni	I_F10a L'azienda ha esplorato diversi metodi organizzativi per tenere le relazioni con i partner esterni (fornitori, fornitori di servizi, ecc)? I_F10b In che modo?
I_F11		I_F11a Esiste un motivo principale per introdurre una nuova struttura nella azienda? Hai vissuto una situazione particolare che vi motivano? I_F11b Quale?
I_F12	Innovazione nella Commercializzazione	I_F12a La vostra azienda ha sviluppato un nuovo design di imballaggio o di progettazione per i vostri prodotti o servizi? <i>(In caso negativo passare alla domanda I_F15).</i> I_F12b Quale?
I_F13		I_F13a La vostra azienda ha utilizzato nuove tecniche di supporto per la promozione dei vostri prodotti? I_F13b In che modo?
I_F14		I_F14a L'azienda ha creato nuovi canali di vendita per la collocazione del prodotto? I_F14b Quali?
I_F15	Effetti dell'innovazione	I_F15a La vostra società ha adottato pratiche "eco-friendly"? I_F15b Quali?
I_F16		I_F16a Ci sono alcune idee dal vostro paese che si è replicato o adattati per la sua attività in Italia? I_F16b Quali?
I_F17		L'azienda ha aumentato o diminuito i costi, l'anno scorso, a causa dell'introduzione delle innovazioni?

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Costi aumentati 2. Costi diminuiti 3. Costi invariati
I_F18		<p>I_F18a La vostra azienda ha introdotto e poi sospeso poco dopo, uno strumento tecnologico?</p> <p>I_F18b In che modo?</p>
I_F19		<p>I_F19a La vostra azienda utilizza i canali digitali di comunicazione? (Come whatsapp, facebook, twitter o Instagram)?</p> <p>I_F19b In che modo?</p>
I_F21	Prospettive Future	<p>I_F21a Pensa che nel prossimo anno la vostra azienda:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. crescerà 2. avrà lo stesso andamento 3. avrà delle perdite <p>I_F21b Per quale motivo?</p>
I_F22		<p>I_F22a La vostra azienda ha in programma di sviluppare o introdurre dell'innovazione nel prossimo anno?</p> <p>I_F22b Che tipo di innovazione?</p>
I_F23		<p>I_F23a Pensi che le istituzioni pubbliche possano sostenere in qualche modo le attività legate all'innovazione per la vostra azienda?</p> <p>I_F23a In che modo?</p>
I_F24		<p>I_F24a Pensi, invece, che i privati possano sostenere in qualche modo le attività legate all'innovazione per la vostra azienda?</p> <p>I_F24b In che modo?</p>

I_G	ICENTIVI/BARRIERE ALL'INNOVAZIONE	
I_G1		<p>I_G1a Quale situazione economica esterna consideri come un incentivo per innovare nella vostra azienda?</p> <p>I_G1b Quale situazione economica esterna consideri come una barriera per innovare nella vostra azienda?</p>
I_G2		<p>I_G2a Quale situazione economica all'interno dell'azienda consideri come un incentivo per innovare nella vostra azienda?</p> <p>I_G2b Quale situazione economica all'interno dell'azienda consideri come una barriera per innovare nella vostra azienda?</p>
I_G3		<p>I_G3a È stato richiesto dai vostri fornitori di innovare/aggiornare il vostro business?</p>

		I_G3b Ti hanno dato qualche incentivo?
I_G4		I_G4a È stato richiesto dai vostri fornitori di innovare/aggiornare il vostro business? I_G4b Per quale ragione?

I_H	RETE DI INNOVAZIONE					
				a) Conosce qualche persona che lavora nei seguenti gruppi? SI / NO	b) Chi conosce?	c) Che cosa avete fatto insieme?
		I_H1	Ricerca & Sviluppo (università, aziende, gov)			
		I_H2	Gruppo Marketing			
		I_H3	Gruppo di produzione			
		I_H4	Concorrenti (nello stesso settore)			
		I_H5	Fornitori tecnologici			
		I_H6	Consulenze-Amministrazione			
		I_H7	Gruppo di interesse (lobby, stock market)			
I_H8				Qualcuno vi ha mai suggerito idee creative che avete poi riutilizzato nella vostra azienda?		
I_H9				Qualcuno l'ha aiutata a implementare le nuove idee nella tua attività?		
I_H10				Qualcuno l'ha aiutata con finanziamenti per lo sviluppo e l'attuazione della nuova idea nella tua attività?		
I_H11	Supporto per il business (consulenza, consulenza professionale, lavoro non retribuito)					

PARTE II: DOMANDE SULL'IMPRENDITORE

II_A	INFORMAZIONI PERSONALI	
II_A1	Luogo di residenza	
II_A2		Hai dei figli? (SI/NO)
II_A3	Altri attributi	

II_B	ESPERIENZA MIGRATORIA	
II_B1		II_B1a In che mese sei arrivato a Brescia? II_B1b In che anno sei arrivato a Brescia?
II_B2		Quale stata la ragione principale per cui hai lasciato il tuo paese d'origine?
II_B3		II_B3a Dove ha vissuto prima? II_B3b In quali anni? II_B3c Per quanto tempo (anni)?
II_B4		C'è stato qualcuno che l'ha aiutato / consigliato di venire in Italia?
II_B5		II_B5a Per quale scopo sei venuto a vivere nel vostro attuale luogo di residenza? 1. Asilo politico 2. Lavoro 3. Lavoro dei genitori 4. Riunire la famiglia 5. Studio 6. Turismo II_B5b Spiegazione
II_B6	Il nome della principale attività quando è arrivato	
II_B7	Il nome della principale attività lo scorso anno	

II_C		CAPITALE UMANO																																		
II_C1a		A che età ha smesso con gli studi formali?																																		
II_C1b		In che anno ha smesso con gli studi formali?																																		
II_C2		In quale città e paese hai studiato? a) Elementari/Medie b) Superiori c) Università d) Postlaurea																																		
II_C3	Lingue parlate	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>II_C3a Lingua</th> <th colspan="4">II_C3b Livello (EU: A-B-C)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>4)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>					II_C3a Lingua	II_C3b Livello (EU: A-B-C)				1)					2)					3)					4)					5)				
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1)																																				
2)																																				
3)																																				
4)																																				
5)																																				
II_C4	Esperienze di lavoro passate	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>II_C4a Nome dell'azienda</th> <th>II_C4b Posizione lavorativa</th> <th>II_C4c Luogo</th> <th>II_C4d Anno inizio</th> <th>II_C4e Anno fine</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>4)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>					II_C4a Nome dell'azienda	II_C4b Posizione lavorativa	II_C4c Luogo	II_C4d Anno inizio	II_C4e Anno fine	1)					2)					3)					4)									
II_C4a Nome dell'azienda	II_C4b Posizione lavorativa	II_C4c Luogo	II_C4d Anno inizio	II_C4e Anno fine																																
1)																																				
2)																																				
3)																																				
4)																																				

II_D		CAPITALE SOCIALE
II_D1	L'appartenenza ad associazioni di immigrati	II_D1a Attualmente appartiene a un'associazione di migranti? (SI/NO) II_D1b Dettagli dell'associazione (nome, luogo e attività) II_D1c Ha partecipato negli ultimi 2 anni ad un'associazione di migranti? II_D1d Dettagli dell'associazione, se diversa
II_D2	Partecipazione regolare alle attività sportive	II_D2a Partecipa a un club sportivo o qualsiasi attività sportiva regolarmente? (SI/NO) II_D2b Dettagli dell'attività sportiva (tipo di sport, la frequenza, la posizione, le attività all'interno del club)

		<p>II_D2c Partecipa a un club sportivo nel suo paese di origine?</p> <p>II_D2d Dettagli della attività sportiva</p>
II_D3	Partecipazione attiva ad un gruppo religioso	<p>II_D3a Partecipa regolarmente a tutte le attività sociali di gruppo religioso? (SI/NO)</p> <p>II_D3b Dettagli del gruppo (nome, la religione, la posizione e le attività)</p> <p>II_D3c Hai partecipare a qualche attività sociali di un gruppo religioso nel suo paese di origine?</p> <p>II_D3d Dettagli del gruppo (nome, la religione, la posizione e le attività)</p>
II_D4	Partecipazione in associazioni imprenditoriali	<p>II_D4a Partecipa regolarmente a un'associazione d'impresе? (SI/NO)</p> <p>II_D4b Dettagli dell'associazione d'impresе (nome, ubicazione, attività e tipo di associazione)</p> <p>II_D4c Partecipava regolarmente a un'associazione di impresе nel suo paese di origine? (SI/NO)</p> <p>II_D4d Dettagli dell'associazione</p>
II_D5	Partecipazione al workshop di formazione per gli imprenditori o manager	<p>II_D5a Ha partecipato a workshop di formazione per gli imprenditori o manager nel corso dell'anno passato? (SI/NO)</p> <p>II_D5b Dettagli del workshop(nome, luogo, competenza e durata)</p> <p>II_D5c</p> <p>II_D5d Dettagli del workshop</p>

II_E	CAPITALE FINANZIARIO															
II_E1		<p>Quanto è stato l'investimento iniziale per avviare la vostra azienda?</p> <p>_____ EURO</p> <p>99999 = non risponde</p>														
II_E2		<p>Chi ha contribuito all'investimento iniziale:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Percentuale del investimento</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1) Propri risparmi</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2) Familiari</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3) Conoscenti connazionali</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5) Associazione</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6) Banca o simili</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Percentuale del investimento	1) Propri risparmi		2) Familiari		3) Conoscenti connazionali		4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi		5) Associazione		6) Banca o simili	
	Percentuale del investimento															
1) Propri risparmi																
2) Familiari																
3) Conoscenti connazionali																
4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi																
5) Associazione																
6) Banca o simili																
II_E3		<p>Quanto è stato l'investimento l'anno scorso?</p> <p>_____ EURO</p> <p>99999 = non risponde</p>														
II_E4		<p>Chi ha contribuito a questo investimento?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Percentuale del investimento</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1) Propri risparmi</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2) Familiari</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3) Conoscenti connazionali</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5) Associazione</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6) Banca o simili</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Percentuale del investimento	1) Propri risparmi		2) Familiari		3) Conoscenti connazionali		4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi		5) Associazione		6) Banca o simili	
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4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi																
5) Associazione																
6) Banca o simili																
II_E5		<p>Avete ricevuto soldi dal vostro paese l'anno scorso?</p> <p>_____ EURO</p> <p>999999 = non risponde</p>														
II_E6		<p>Chi le ha trasferito fondi dal suo paese di origine?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>% del soldi</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1) Propri risparmi</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2) Familiari</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3) Conoscenti connazionali</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		% del soldi	1) Propri risparmi		2) Familiari		3) Conoscenti connazionali		4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi					
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6) Banca o simili																
II_E7		<p>Avete inviato i soldi-rimesse al vostro paese (o ad altri parenti in altre località) nel corso dell'anno passato?</p> <p>_____ EURO</p> <p>999999 = non risponde</p>														
II_E8		<p>A chi ha trasferito fondi dall'Italia al vostro paese di origine?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>% delle rimesse</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1) Propri risparmi</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2) Familiari</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3) Conoscenti connazionali</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>5) Associazione</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>6) Banca o simili</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		% delle rimesse	1) Propri risparmi		2) Familiari		3) Conoscenti connazionali		4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi		5) Associazione		6) Banca o simili	
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4) Conoscenti provenienti da altri paesi																
5) Associazione																
6) Banca o simili																

II_F	RETI DI INFORMAZIONI						
	Chi si raggiunge in caso di (segnare con una croce il campo scelto)						
II_F1		a) Famiglia	b) Amici	c) Vicini	d) Colleghi	e) Conoscenti	f)Altro (specificare)
	1) Problemi personali						
	2) Urgente bisogno di soldi						
	3) Bisogno di assumere qualcuno per un compito urgente						
	4) Consigli su come gestire l'azienda						
	5) Consigli su procedure legali e burocratiche						

Dichiarazione di partecipazione

1. I partecipo volontariamente a questa ricerca rispondendo al questionario.
2. Dichiaro che le informazioni fornite sono accurate, complete e veritiere.
3. Mi è stato spiegato lo scopo di questa ricerca e approvo l'uso dei miei dati personali esclusivamente per scopi accademici.

I miei dati saranno resi anonimi nel database aggregato per l'analisi e la presentazione dei risultati.

Nome	
Data	
Firma	

Io voglio suggerire per un' intervista a:

Nome Imprenditore/ Azienda	
Celulare	
Email	

Codice:

Progetto di Ricerca in Imprenditorialità, Migrazione e Innovazione
Programma di Dottorato in Economic Sociology
Università di Brescia UNIBS – Università di Milano UNIMI – University of Amsterdam - UvA

I partecipanti riceveranno un ricordo contenente informazioni dalla propria rete personale, quando il nostro progetto sarà finito, nel novembre 2016.

Il premio sarà dato ai primi 5 imprenditori che avranno suggerito il maggior numero di nuovi imprenditori con una intervista a termine. Quindi passate parola!

Ricercatori:

Juan Francisco Alvarado Email: innova.mig@gmail.com	Name: Linda Alengoz Celulare: 3209312580
--	---

Affiliations of the Research:



Prof. Flaminio Squazzoni	Prof. Jan Rath
Università di Brescia – Faculty of Economics	University of Amsterdam – Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research
Via San Faustino 74b, 25122, Brescia, Italy	Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, Amsterdam, The Netherlands



ANNEX 3 | INTERVIEW GUIDE IN ENGLISH

Entrepreneurship, Migration and Innovation Research Project
Ph.D. Program in Economic Sociology

University of Brescia UNIBS - University of Milan UNIMI – University of Amsterdam - UvA

Code:

PART ONE: ENTREPREURSHIP AND INNOVATION

A	PERSONAL DATA	
1	Place of residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Amsterdam <input type="checkbox"/> Randstad <input type="checkbox"/> The Netherlands <input type="checkbox"/> Europe <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
2	Age	
3	Gender	
4	Nationality (ies)	
5	Family composition	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Cohabitation <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce/Widow
6		<input type="checkbox"/> Children # _____
B	ENTREPRENEURSHIP	
1	Sector of the economy	<input type="checkbox"/> Transport <input type="checkbox"/> Information-Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Finance and insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Real-state <input type="checkbox"/> Professional services <input type="checkbox"/> Support to companies <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Health care <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic and sport activities <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
2	Main geographical area of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> City of Amsterdam <input type="checkbox"/> Region of Randstad <input type="checkbox"/> The Netherlands <input type="checkbox"/> Europe Other: _____
3	Business partners	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
4	Time of establishment	When did you start your business? (dd-mm-yyyy)
5	Motivation to start a company	What was your main motivation to start your business? How did you select the type of business?

6	Selection of the geographical location	<p>In which geographical area do you usually work?</p> <p>How did you choose this area to work?</p>															
7	3 main products or services offered	Product or service	Brief description														
8	Previous experience and particular skills	<p>Which is the main previous work experience that helps you during your current business?</p> <p>Is there any particular skill that is extremely important for your current work? How was the path to proficiency of it?</p>															
9	Bureaucratic regulations	Which regulations (local and national) were the most complicated or exhausting when starting your company?															
10	Competitors	How would you describe in general the level of competition in your same field?															
11	Support from groups	<p>Has your company received a support from a particular group?</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Type of support/help to start the business</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Co-nationals</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religious group</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business group</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Association</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Entrepreneurial workshop</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neighbours</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Type of support/help to start the business	Co-nationals		Religious group		Business group		Association		Entrepreneurial workshop		Neighbours	
	Type of support/help to start the business																
Co-nationals																	
Religious group																	
Business group																	
Association																	
Entrepreneurial workshop																	
Neighbours																	

12	Events	<p>Is it important for your business to attend conferences, entrepreneurs' meetings or business fairs?</p> <p>Which conferences or business meeting have your company attended in the past year?</p>
	Type of companies	<p>Similar companies Strategic Alliances (complimentary) Family business Subsidiaries abroad</p> <p>Main economic activity Location / owner's nationality Type of agreement Future perspectives</p>
13-20	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">Main Suppliers</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 20px; width: 200px; height: 150px; margin: 5px;"></div> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 20px; width: 200px; height: 150px; margin: 5px;"></div> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 20px; width: 200px; height: 150px; margin: 5px;"></div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="text-align: center; margin-right: 10px;"> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"> <p>Own business</p> </div> <div style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0 5px;">=</div> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 20px; width: 200px; height: 150px; margin: 5px;"></div> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 20px; width: 200px; height: 150px; margin: 5px;"></div> </div> <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p>Partnership</p> </div> </div>	

	<p style="text-align: center;">Key costumers</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 25px; width: 300px; height: 150px;"></div> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 25px; width: 300px; height: 150px;"></div> <div style="border: 2px solid black; border-radius: 25px; width: 300px; height: 150px;"></div> </div>									
C	INNOVATION									
1	Self-perception of innovation	<p>On the following scale, how innovative is your business?</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>No innovation</td><td>Few of our activities are innovative</td><td>Some of our activities are innovative</td><td>Most of activities are innovative</td><td>Totally innovative</td></tr> </table>				No innovation	Few of our activities are innovative	Some of our activities are innovative	Most of activities are innovative	Totally innovative
No innovation	Few of our activities are innovative	Some of our activities are innovative	Most of activities are innovative	Totally innovative						
2	Product innovation	<p>Have your company introduced a new good or service in the last year?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Good Service </div>								
3		<p>Which is your main reason to introduce a new product? Did a particular situation happened to push you to innovate?</p>								
4		<p>How much of your current sales are the effect of the introduction of that product?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <p>____ Less than 25%</p> <p>____ Between 50% and 75%</p> </div> <div> <p>____ Between 25% and 50%</p> <p>____ More than 75%</p> </div> </div>								
5	Process innovation	<p>Have your company introduced new methods of producing goods or services?</p>								
6		<p>Have your company introduced new distribution methods or delivery for the products and services you offer?</p>								

7		Have your company introduced supporting activities for your processes (computing, software, purchase system)? If yes, please explain
8		Which is your main reason to introduce a new process? Did a particular situation happened to push you to innovate?
9	Organisational innovation	Do you consider you company hierarchical or horizontal? Have you included a new way to organize the workload among employees?
10		Has your company tried new forms to delegate the work responsibilities of employees? If yes, please explain
11		Has your company explored different ways to organize the relations with external partners (suppliers, service providers, etc)?
12		Which is your main reason to introduce a new organisation chart? Did a particular situation happened to push you into innovate?
13		Has your company design a new packing or design to advertise what you sell?
14	Marketing Innovation	Has your company used new techniques in media for the promotion of your products?

15		Has your company created new sales channels or product placement?
16		Does your company use digital channels of communication? (Like whatsapp, facebook, twitter or Instagram?)
17	Effects of innovation	Has your company promotes or adopts environmental-friendly practices such as: <input type="checkbox"/> Recycling of process residuals <input type="checkbox"/> Saving energy consumption <input type="checkbox"/> Reducing consumption of raw materials <input type="checkbox"/> Other
18		Are there some ideas from your home country that you have replicated or adapted to your business in the Netherlands? Do you feel that being a foreigner help or restrict your business?
19		Has your company increased or decreased the costs in the past year because of any innovation?
20		Is your company planning to develop or introduce any innovation in the next year? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Which kind of innovation? Did your company introduced a technological tool and suspended it in a short time? If yes, please explain

21	Future perspectives	What are your plans for your business in the near future?	
22		Do you think in the next year your company will: ____grow ____ shrink or ____ remain the same. Are there possibilities to expand your business? Hire people for a specific purpose?	
23	Boost creative ideas that you applied in your business?	3	<input type="checkbox"/> N
24	Implementation of new ideas into your business?	3	<input type="checkbox"/> N
25	Funding for the development and implementation of the new idea into your business?	3	<input type="checkbox"/> N
276	Support for the business (advice, professional consultancy, unpaid work)	3	<input type="checkbox"/> N
INCENTIVES/BARRIERS TO CREATE NEW THINGS IN YOUR BUSINESS			
27	Which external economic situation would you consider an incentive or a barrier to innovate in your business?	Incentive	Barrier
28	Which situation inside the company would you consider an incentive or a barrier to innovate in your business?	Incentive	Barrier
29	Have your providers asked you to innovate/update your business? Did they give you any incentive?	Direct question	Incentive
30	Have your clients asked you to innovate/update your business? Did they give you any reason?	Direct question	Reason

PART TWO: MIGRATION PATH

1	When did you arrive to your current place of residence?	Year	Month	
2	What was the main reason to leave your country?			
3	Where did you live before? for how long?	Place (city-country)	Year	How long?
4	Was there someone who helped/recommended you to come to the Netherlands?	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">N</div>		
5	What was your purpose to come and live in your current place of residence?	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Study <input type="checkbox"/> Work </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Family reunification <input type="checkbox"/> Asylum </div> </div> <p>How did you take that decision?</p>		
6	What were your main activities when you just arrived to the Netherlands?			
7	What has been your main activity in this past year?			

8	Languages for daily life or for work	Language	Level (EU: A-B-C)	Daily life / work			
9	Dutch	How important is Dutch when you live as a foreigner in the Netherlands? (please provide example)					
		How important is Dutch for your own business in the Netherlands?					
10	NETWORK OF INFORMATION - Who do you reach in case of (mark a cross on each field)						
		Family	Friend	Neighbour	Work Colleague	Acquaintance	Other
	Personal problem						
	Urgent need of cash						
	Need to hire someone for an urgent task						
	Advice on how to handle your company						
	Advice on legal and bureaucratic procedures						

Doctoral researcher:
 Juan Francisco Alvarado Valenzuela
jfalvarado@uva.nl

Affiliations of the Research:



Prof. Flaminio Squazzoni	Prof. Jan Rath
Università di Brescia – Faculty of Economics	University of Amsterdam – Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research
Via San Faustino 74b, 25122, Brescia, Italy	Nieuwe Achtergracht 166, Amsterdam, The Netherlands



Participation Statement

1. I voluntarily participate in this doctoral research by answering to this interview.
2. I declare that the provided information is accurate, complete and true.
3. I was explained the aim of this research and approve the use of my personal data only for academic purposes. My data will remain anonymous in the aggregate database for the analysis and presentation of the results.

Name	
Date	
Signature	

I would like to suggest the following person for an interview:

Name of entrepreneur or of the company	
Cellphone	
Email Webpage	

Name	Age	Gender	Nationality (ies)	Level of studies (Primary P, secondary S, university U, postgraduate PG)	Languages	Place of residence	Friend / Family / Acquaintance	Closeness (1 to 5)	How do you know each other?	Code	Contact with
										1	
										2	
										3	
										4	
										5	
										6	
										7	
										8	
										9	
										10	

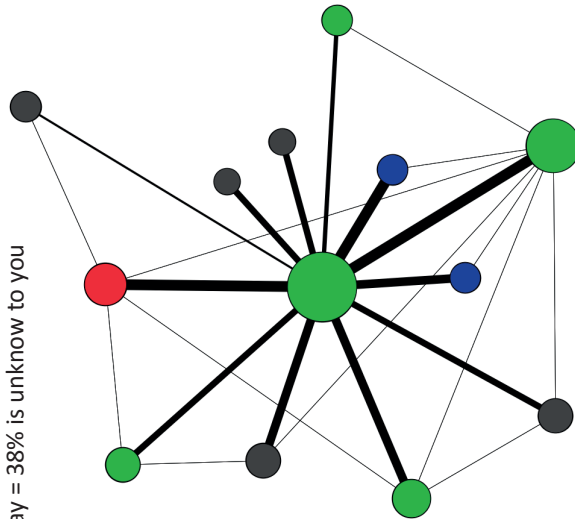
ANNEX 4 | EXAMPLES OF NETWORKS CARDS FOR RESPONDENTS

Level of studies

There is a tendency to get along with other people holding similar level of studies, because of similar interest, similar study places and similar specialization.

Your network shows that

- Green = 38% hold a Post-graduate degree
- Blue = 16% hold a University degree
- Red = 8 % hold a Secondary degree
- Gray = 38% is unknown to you



Research about Entrepreneurship, Migration and Innovation

Visualization of the social contacts useful for business initiatives

Based on the interview carried out in 2016

Code 120

Joint PhD Program in Economic Sociology and Labour Studies



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI BRESCIA



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI MILANO



UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM

PhD Candidate: Juan Francisco Alvarado

Contact email: jfalvarado@uva.nl

Annex 4

4

Circles

Each circle represent one of the 13 people of your business network. The circle in the centre is you.

The size of each circle represents the total number of connections that this person has to other people.

The size of the circle grows according to the number of other people connected in your network

Lines

Each line represents that the person knows the other.
There are 48 connections in total inside your network

The thickness of the line represents how close you feel this person: thicker is emotionally closer to you.

Category of comparison

There are 5 categories:

Age / Gender / Language / Place of residence / Level of Studies
For each category, there is a short statement from previous research.

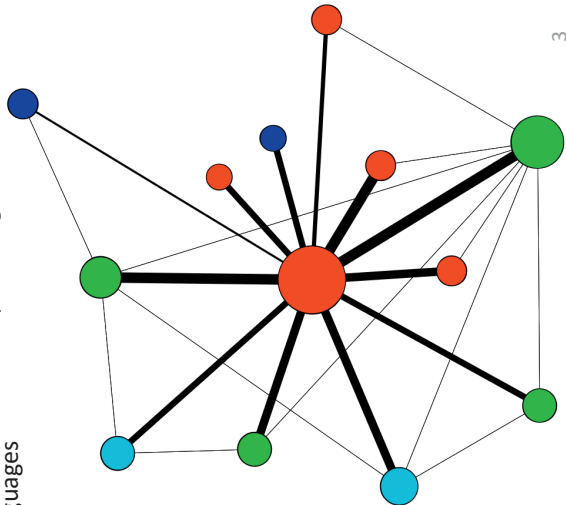
Each category shows percentages and colours describing how your contacts are similar or diverse to you.

Languages

Sharing a language makes communication clearer and easier for business purposes. But, Amsterdam offers a hub for English-speaking business. The use of Dutch may not be a mandatory requirement compared to other locations.

Your networks is formed by:

- Light Blue = 15% who speak English only
- Blue = 15% who speak English and more languages
- Orange = 39% who speak English and Dutch only
- Green = 31% who speak English, Dutch and more languages

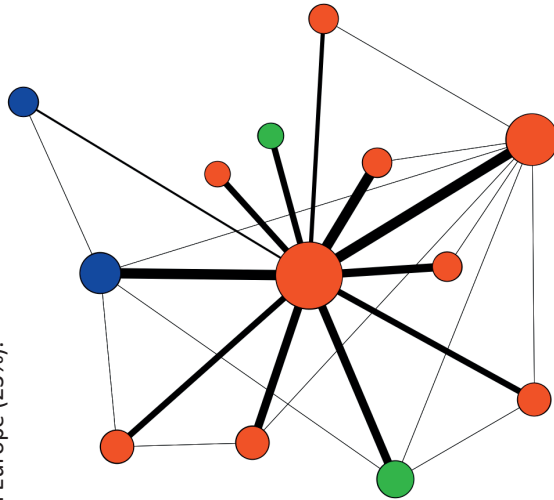


Place of residence

Being in the same geographical area increase the chance to meet in person, favour trust and help for business. Besides, foreigners have important connections crossing frontiers: their own home country or other foreigners. Your contact are located in:

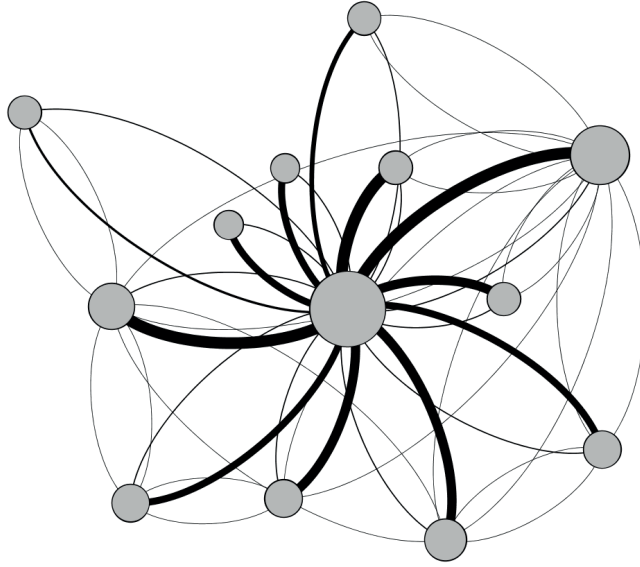
- Orange = 70% in the Netherlands
- Blue = 15% in Europe (outside NL)
- Green = 15% in North America

But, considering the region of origin, your contacts come from the Netherlands (31%), North America (38%), Asia (8%) and Europe (23%).



Annex 4

Complete Ego-Network



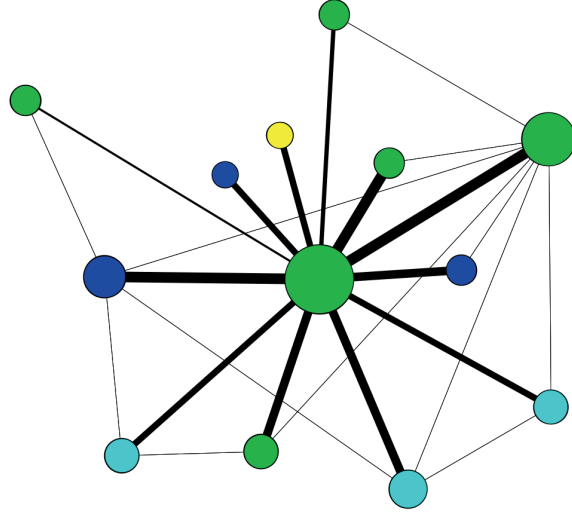
2

Age

People in a given age group have larger similarities with hobbies, interests, places to visit. Mentors or supporters commonly are older meanwhile people working with or for you are younger.

Your network is formed by:

- Green = 46% of similar age group: +/- 5 years from you
- Blue = 23% with 5-10 years older than you
- Light Blue = 23% with 10-15 years older than you
- Yellow= 8% with 25-30 years older than you

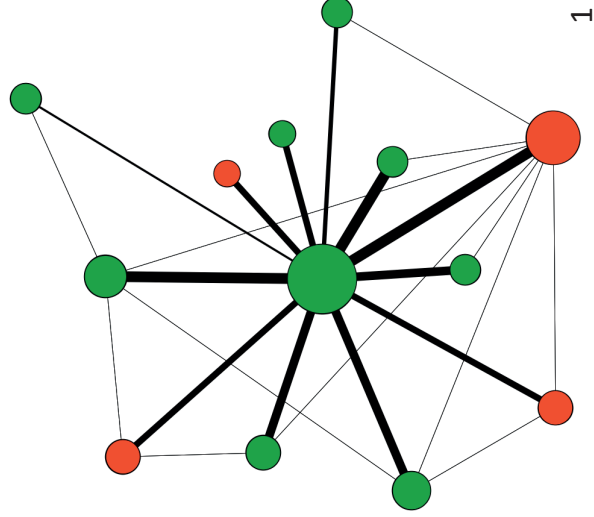


Gender

For business purposes, there is a tendency to have more men who act as role models, advice givers and financiers. The role of women is increasing in certain sectors of the economy.

Your network is formed by:

- Green = 69% Males
- Orange = 31% Females



Annex 4

1

Progetto di ricerca finanziato
dall'Università degli Studi di Brescia e
dalla Fondazione Roberto Franceschi
Onlus

REF 220

Per ulteriori informazioni si prega di
contattare: innova.mig@gmail.com



Dottorato di Ricerca in Sociologia Economica e Studi del Lavoro

Imprenditorialità, Migrazione e Innovazione

**Per maggiori informazioni riguardo il
programma di Dottorato di Ricerca :**

www.nasp.eu



**Visualizzazione della sua rete di
contatti, considerando le informazioni
fornite dall'intervista**

Anno 2016

Cerchi

Ogni cerchio rappresenta una delle 8 persone della sua rete d'affari. Il cerchio al centro è sé stesso.

La dimensione di ogni cerchio rappresenta il numero totale di connessioni che quella persona ha con le altre persone.

La dimensione del cerchio cresce a seconda del numero di persone parte della rete.

Linee

La linea indica che una persona conosce l'altra, quindi ogni linea rappresenta la connessione tra due persone che si conoscono.

Ci sono 38 connessioni in totale nella sua rete.

Lo spessore della linea rappresenta il grado di vicinanza tra lei e quella persona: più la linea è spesso più la persona è emotivamente vicina a lei.

Categorie di Confronto

Le categorie identificate sono 3:

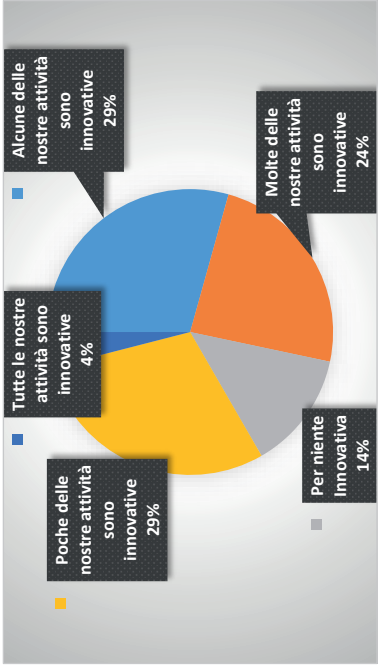
Età / Genere / Nazionalità

Per ogni categoria, segue una breve spiegazione degli studi condotti in precedenza

Ogni categoria presenta le percentuali e i colori relativi al grado di somiglianza e differenza tra lei e i suoi contatti.

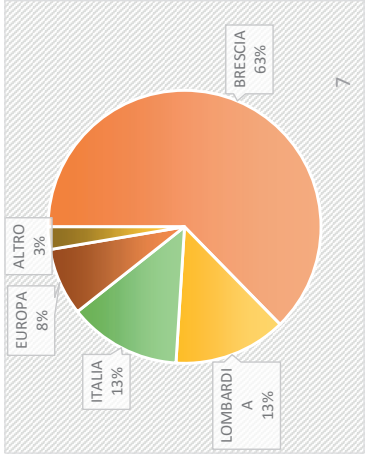
Alcune delle nostre attività sono innovative

Comparazione con altri imprenditori



Area geografica principale dove si svolgono le sue attività:

Brescia

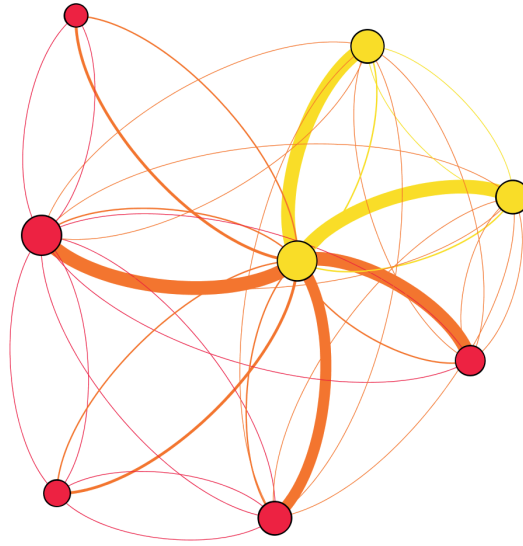


Nazionalità

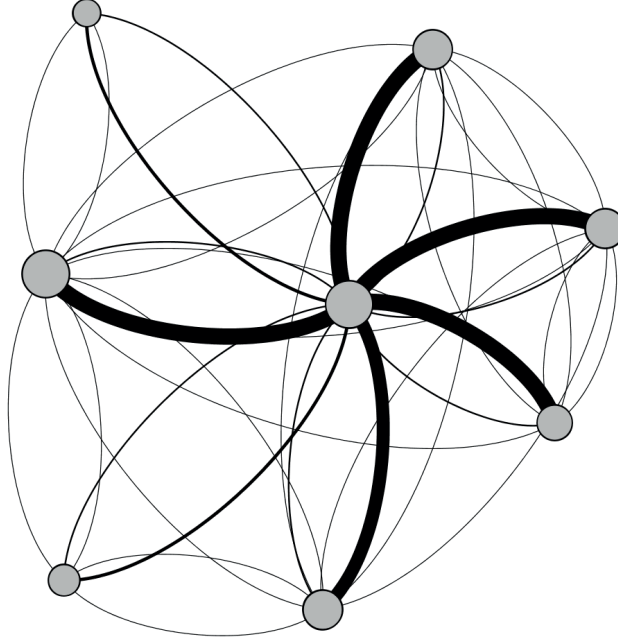
Persone che provengono dallo stesso paese hanno maggiori possibilità di incontrarsi, e questo favorisce l'instaurarsi di fiducia reciproca e il sostegno alle imprese. Inoltre, gli stranieri hanno importanti connessioni con l'estero: sia con il proprio paese di origine che con altri paesi.

I vostri contatti vengono da:

- Rosso = 63% dall'Italia
- Giallo = 37% dal suo stesso paese



La Rete Completa



Annex 4

6

Età

A seconda delle diverse fasce di età, le persone ritrovano diverse somiglianze per quanto riguarda gli interessi e i posti da visitare. I mentori o i sostenitori sono solitamente più anziani mentre le persone che lavorano con o per voi sono più giovani.

La sua rete è composta da:

- Blu = 38% delle persone si trovano nella vostra stessa fascia di età: +/- 5 anni.
- Verde = 12% delle persone hanno 10-15 anni più di lei.
- Arancione = 50% delle persone hanno 20-25 anni più di lei



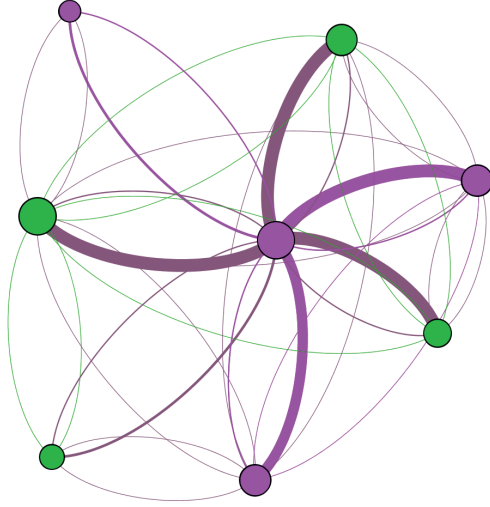
Annex 4

Genere

In ambito lavorativo la tendenza generale è avere' più uomini che fungono da ruoli modello, consulenti e finanziatori. Ciò nonostante il ruolo delle donne è in aumento in alcuni settori dell'economia.

La sua rete è composta da:

- Verde = 50% Maschi
- Viola = 50% Femmine



5

References

ONLINE RESOURCES FROM WEBSITES

- Databases from the ISTAT and Decreto-Legge 179
 - <http://www.istat.it/it/informazioni/per-i-decisori-pubblici/start-up-innovative>
- Databases from the chamber of commerce of Brescia: Reference of the type of data available:
 - http://www.bs.camcom.it/index.phtml?Id_VMenu=249
- Economic Revue Vademecum per le straniero: Come aprire un'attività economica in Italia
 - <http://www.economicrevue.com/HTM/archivio/24/it/07.pdf>
- Programs from the city of Brescia
 - <http://www.provincia.brescia.it/innovazione-0>
 - <http://cit.provincia.brescia.it/programma-2016-2017.html>
 - http://www.aib.bs.it/progetti_speciali/scuola_lavoro
- Quote about Levi Strauss & Co in Chapter1
 - <http://levistrauss.com/our-story/#levi-strauss>

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Summaries

SUMMARY (ENGLISH)

Innovation practices contribute to the socio-economic development of a society, but research on the role of migrant entrepreneurs is still developing. This study looks at the intersection between innovation and entrepreneurship, focusing specifically on migratory experiences translated into business ideas. This research explores the elements in those businesses ideas that are *new*, those that are *adapted* from other contexts and those that are being *shaped* by the interaction with people around the entrepreneur.

The service sector was chosen because of its importance to individual customers and corporations in the present day. The presence of migrants as workers has been already studied, and their role as owners of companies is usually limited to the lenses of ethnic-based markets or the low-end of the opportunity structure. In this study, I look at the novel business ideas in the services provided by migrant entrepreneurs in a broader opportunity structure. The main theoretical inspirations come from the model of diffusion of innovations and the approach of mixed-embeddedness, as can be read in Chapter 2. The main argument is that businesses using innovation as a strategy are influenced by a variety of factors: i) individual characteristics, ii) the relation to innovation in terms of ideas transformed in products, iii) the local context in the receiving societies, and iv) the role of social connections. The research questions focus on each of those four theoretical contributions organized as *building blocks*. Each building block corresponds to important aspects that explore innovation and entrepreneurship, with the particular look at the case of migrants who are, at least in a first stage, outsiders in a receiving society.

This study identifies economic innovation as incremental, which can be seen in products, production of services, internal organisation of a company or marketing strategies. At the individual level of entrepreneurs, novel business ideas are said to be influenced by three main aspects: a) the educational background or work experience in other societies providing business ideas that are new for the specific sector where they operate; b) the financial means to test new services and face the unknown response of the consumers; and c) the diverse social groups contributing to create safe zones for the entrepreneurs.

To fill the gap of research about innovation among migrant entrepreneurs, the study looks at two empirical cases. 70 interviews in Brescia, Italy and 41 interviews in Amsterdam, the Netherlands are used to explore innovative business ideas based on the migratory experiences of entrepreneurs. In each of those cases, the collected information provides a deeper insight into the conceptual relationships of the theory. One case was looking at the relationship *product & entrepreneurs*, the other looked at *context & entrepreneurs*, and both looked at the *connections & entrepreneurs*.

The methods for data collection as well as for data management and data analysis are described in Chapter 3. Given the situation that each case explored complementing facets of the concepts, two parallel, but cross-fertilized, processes of data collection and analysis were used. Interview guides, in Italian and in English, were used to collect information. The analysis of the interviews was centred on aspects related to their personal situation, the situation of the company, the description of their services, their migratory experiences and the circle of business connections around them.

Chapter 4 looks at the relation of *product & entrepreneurs* using the empirical case of Amsterdam. Incremental innovation is identified, drawing upon a framework of five features: relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability. Migrant businesses adapt new goods and services that a local population does not have, using past experience accumulated in terms of education, work, migration and cultural practices. The results show two types of innovation: the use of digital technology in the form of marketing innovation, and the use of cultural traits in the form of product and production innovation. The English-speaking segment of the market benefits from digital technology that is used by the “expat community”. The cultural traits provide *familiarity* as the core of the service, with traditions embedded in the language, behavioural traits and social interactions.

Chapter 5 looks at the relation of *context & entrepreneurs* using the empirical case of Brescia. Despite the existence of programmes of support for innovation, there is a lack of incentives targeting foreigners who want to introduce innovative business practices in the region. Migrants’ services target the mainstream local market by using the Italian language for business purposes and competing, usually in price, against other service providers. The dispersion of immigrant communities in the region generates an intermittent demand for their services among people with the same ethnic origin, so their business activities struggle and survive on a small scale. Additionally, migrant entrepreneurs use their time for other activities to facilitate the individual adaptation of their human, social, financial and cultural capital to the receiving society. The relationship between migrants and locals shows incipient incentives for face-to-face communication channels to bring information that could be novel for locals. Also, migrants use digital communication among entrepreneurs of the same, or culturally close, ethnic origins, such as Facebook or WhatsApp groups to exchange information about prices, providers and regulations.

Chapter 6 looks at the relation of *connections & entrepreneurs* using both cases. The results show that both similar and diverse networks are needed, the former to develop and test business ideas, and the latter to implement and expand them. There is a knowledge stage where ideas are developed, being described by the interviewees in the case of Amsterdam and showing favourable conditions for the creation of innovative ideas. Migratory experiences contribute to the adaptation of innovative ideas to this urban location, together with the influence of networks with similar people with high levels of education, adequate work experience, and sufficient financial means. Besides, migrants have created an advantageous position in the local market with the creation of (Dutch) local business contacts. There is a decision stage, using the interviewees in the case of Brescia, showing a limited implementation of innovative business

ideas. It is the attributes of the connections, rather than the number of them, that is important for this context. Connections with people of a similar cultural background, younger than the entrepreneur and of the same sex suggest a lack of expertise and support. Entrepreneurs are discouraged and constrained from implementing innovation, and favour the replication of business ideas from the competition.

To conclude, chapter 7 shows the different impact of the introduction of innovations by migrant businesses. There are certainly intended positive consequences, such as high revenues for the entrepreneur, or a better way of doing things. At the same time there are unintended consequences such as the replacement of less efficient, but traditional, niches, or changes in cultural traits. For further studies, the above-mentioned factors ought to be considered when looking at the incorporation of novel business ideas in local economies. The findings using the four building blocks contribute to understanding the motivations, aspirations and potential of migrant entrepreneurs who are able – or not – to adapt innovative business ideas to their receiving contexts.

SUMMARY (ITALIAN) – RIASSUNTO

L'innovazione contribuisce allo sviluppo socio-economico della società, ma la ricerca sul ruolo degli imprenditori migranti è ancora in via di sviluppo. Questo studio esamina l'intersezione tra innovazione e imprenditorialità, focalizzandosi, in particolare, sulle esperienze migratorie tradotte in idee imprenditoriali. La ricerca esplora gli elementi *innovativi* presenti in queste idee imprenditoriali, quelli che sono stati *riadattati* da altri contesti e quelli che *prendono forma* in seguito ad interazioni con altre persone.

È stato scelto il settore dei servizi per l'importanza che oggi riveste, sia per i singoli clienti che per le aziende. La presenza di migranti come lavoratori è già stata studiata in passato, ma gli studi sugli imprenditori migranti solitamente si limitano ad analizzare i mercati etnici o rivolgono la loro attenzione alla fascia bassa della struttura delle opportunità. In questo studio propongo di studiare le idee degli imprenditori migranti attivi nel settore dei servizi utilizzando una definizione più ampia di struttura delle opportunità.

Le principali ispirazioni teoriche che sono base di questo studio provengono dal modello di diffusione delle innovazioni e dall'approccio del "mixed-embeddedness", come si può leggere nel Capitolo 2. L'argomento principale è che le imprese che usano l'innovazione come strategia sono influenzate da una varietà di fattori: i) le caratteristiche individuali, ii) la relazione con l'innovazione in termini di idee trasformate in prodotti, iii) il contesto locale nelle società di accoglienza, e (iv) il ruolo delle connessioni sociali. Le domande di ricerca affrontate in questo lavoro si concentrano su ciascuno di questi quattro contributi teorici organizzati come *elementi costitutivi*. Ogni elemento di base corrisponde ad aspetti importanti che esplorano l'innovazione e l'imprenditorialità, con la particolarità di considerare il caso dei migranti che sono, almeno in una prima fase, *outsider* nella società ospitante.

Questo studio identifica l'innovazione economica come incrementale. Tale incremento può essere visto nei prodotti, nella produzione di servizi, nell'organizzazione interna dell'azienda o nelle strategie di marketing. A livello di imprenditore come individuo, nella letteratura sul tema c'è un generale consenso sul fatto che le nuove idee imprenditoriali siano influenzate da tre aspetti principali: a) il background educativo o l'esperienza lavorativa in altre società che forniscono idee imprenditoriali nuove per quel settore specifico, b) i mezzi finanziari per testare nuovi servizi ed affrontare la (sconosciuta) risposta dei consumatori finali, e c) i diversi gruppi sociali che contribuiscono a creare zone sicure per gli imprenditori.

Per rispondere alle domande ricerca in merito al ruolo dell'innovazione tra gli imprenditori migranti lo studio esamina due casi empirici. Sono state svolte 70 interviste a Brescia (Italia) e 41 interviste ad Amsterdam (Paesi Bassi) per esplorare quali idee imprenditoriali innovative fossero basate sulle esperienze migratorie degli imprenditori. In ognuno di questi casi le informazioni raccolte forniscono una visione più profonda delle relazioni concettuali della teoria. Nel caso bresciano è stato indagato il rapporto tra *i prodotti e gli imprenditori*, mentre nel caso olandese si è analizzato il rapporto tra *il contesto e gli imprenditori*. In entrambi i casi sono stati esaminati i rapporti tra *le reti di conoscenti e gli imprenditori*.

I metodi per la raccolta, la gestione e l'analisi dei dati sono descritti nel capitolo 3. Dato che ogni caso ha esplorato aspetti complementari degli elementi costitutivi sopra citati, due processi paralleli ma incrociati di raccolta e analisi dei dati sono state scelte. Le guide per le interviste, in italiano e in inglese, sono state utilizzate per raccogliere informazioni. L'analisi delle interviste si è focalizzata su aspetti legati alla situazione personale dell'intervistato, alla situazione dell'azienda, alle descrizioni dei servizi offerti, alle esperienze migratorie e all'insieme di network commerciali in cui l'intervistato era inserito.

Il capitolo 4 esamina la relazione tra *prodotto e imprenditori* attraverso il caso empirico di Amsterdam. L'innovazione incrementale viene identificata sulla base di cinque caratteristiche: vantaggio relativo, compatibilità, complessità, *trialability* (propensione a testare nuovi prodotti) e osservabilità. Le imprese dei migranti forniscono nuovi beni e servizi utilizzando l'esperienza accumulata in termini di istruzione, lavoro, migrazione e cultura. I risultati hanno mostrato due tipi di innovazione: i) innovazione di marketing attraverso l'uso della tecnologia digitale e ii) l'innovazione di prodotto e di produzione attraverso l'applicazione di tipici tratti culturali. Il segmento di mercato in lingua inglese sfrutta la tecnologia digitale, largamente diffusa tra la "comunità degli espatriati". I tratti culturali forniscono quella *familiarità* che contraddistingue il servizio offerto, con tradizioni incapsulate nella lingua, nei tratti comportamentali e nelle interazioni sociali.

Il capitolo 5 esamina la relazione tra *contesto e imprenditori* analizzando le interviste realizzate nella città di Brescia. Nonostante l'esistenza di programmi di sostegno all'innovazione, si registra una mancanza di incentivi rivolti agli stranieri che vogliono introdurre pratiche commerciali innovative nella regione. I servizi offerti delle aziende di migranti si rivolgono al mercato locale utilizzando la lingua italiana ed entrando in concorrenza, di solito tramite i prezzi, contro altri fornitori di servizi locali. La dispersione delle comunità di migranti nella regione genera una domanda sporadica di servizi tra persone dello stesso paese, quindi le loro attività imprenditoriali lottano e sopravvivono su piccola scala.

Inoltre, gli imprenditori migranti usano il loro tempo anche per altre attività che facilitino l'integrazione del loro capitale umano, sociale, finanziario e culturale nelle società riceventi. Le relazioni iniziali tra migranti e popolazione locale non sono favorevoli alla creazione di canali di comunicazione faccia a faccia che possano portare nuove informazioni per la popolazione locale. Inoltre, i migranti usano la comunicazione digitale (gruppi Facebook o WhatsApp) tra imprenditori dello stesso paese, o di origine etnica culturalmente vicina, per scambiarsi informazioni su prezzi, fornitori e regolamenti.

Il capitolo 6 esamina la relazione tra le reti di conoscenti e *imprenditori* analizzando le interviste in entrambe le città (Brescia e Amsterdam). I risultati mostrano come siano necessarie reti di conoscenti composte sia da persone simili all'imprenditore/trice, utilizzate per sviluppare e testare le idee di business, sia dissimili, quest'ultime necessarie per implementare ed estendere tali idee di business. Le interviste ad Amsterdam hanno evidenziato la presenza di condizioni favorevoli per lo sviluppo di idee innovative utili nella fase della conoscenza. Le esperienze migratorie hanno contribuito allo sviluppo di idee innovative in questa città grazie anche all'influenza delle reti di conoscenti composte da persone simili all'imprenditore/trice e con

un alto livello di istruzione, un'esperienza lavorativa adeguata e mezzi finanziari sufficienti. Inoltre, questa posizione vantaggiosa nel mercato locale ha contribuito a creare contatti con i commerciali locali (olandesi). Nella fase decisionale, le interviste a Brescia mostrano una limitata implementazione di idee imprenditoriali innovative. Risulta più importante la qualità delle connessioni in questo contesto, piuttosto che il numero. Le connessioni con persone con un *background* culturale simile e dello stesso sesso ma più giovani dell'imprenditore/trice suggeriscono una mancanza di esperienza e supporto. Per questo motivo gli imprenditori sono scoraggiati e costretti ad implementare l'innovazione favorendo la replica delle idee di business. Infine, il capitolo 7 illustra gli impatti positivi e negativi dell'introduzione di innovazioni da parte delle imprese di migranti. Si registrano indubbie conseguenze positive di tali innovazioni, come un reddito più alto per l'imprenditore/trice o un modo migliore di fare le cose. Allo stesso tempo ci sono conseguenze non intenzionali come la sostituzione di tradizionali, seppur meno efficienti, nicchie, oppure cambiamenti nei tratti culturali. Come tema di ricerca per futuri studi i fattori sopra menzionati dovrebbero essere considerati osservando l'inserimento di nuove idee imprenditoriali nelle economie locali. I risultati emersi applicando i quattro elementi costitutivi contribuiscono a comprendere le motivazioni, le aspirazioni ed il potenziale degli imprenditori migranti che sono in grado, o no, di adattare idee imprenditoriali innovative ai loro contesti di accoglienza.

SUMMARY (DUTCH) – SAMENVATTING

Innovatie praktijken dragen bij aan de sociaaleconomische ontwikkeling van de maatschappij, maar onderzoek naar de rol van ondernemers met een migratie achtergrond is zich nog steeds aan het ontwikkelen. Dit onderzoek kijkt naar het snijvlak tussen innovatie en ondernemerschap, met speciale focus op hoe ervaringen met migratie worden vertaald naar business ideeën. Dit onderzoek verkent de *nieuwe* elementen van deze business ideeën, de elementen die zijn *aangepast* vanuit andere contexten, en de elementen die zijn *gevormd* door de interactie van de ondernemer met de mensen in zijn of haar netwerk.

Er is gekozen om te kijken naar de dienstensector, vanwege het hedendaagse belang ervan voor individuele consumenten en bedrijven. Eerder onderzoek heeft al gekeken naar migranten als werknemers, daarbij blijft hun rol als eigenaar van een onderneming meestal beperkt tot etnische markten of de onderkant van de markt. In dit onderzoek kijk ik naar de nieuwe business ideeën in de diensten aangeboden door migrant-ondernemers in een bredere kansenstructuur. De belangrijkste theoretische inspiratie komt van het 'diffusion of innovations' model en de 'mixed-embeddedness' aanpak, waar in hoofdstuk twee meer over gelezen kan worden. Het hoofdargument is dat ondernemingen die innovatie als strategie gebruiken beïnvloed worden door verschillende factoren: i) individuele kenmerken, ii) de relatie tot innovatie aangaande ideeën omzetten in producten, iii) de lokale context van de samenleving waarin de ondernemer actief is, en iv) de rol van sociale connecties. De onderzoeksvragen richten zich op elk van deze vier theoretische bijdragen als bouwstenen. Elke bouwsteen komt overeen met een belangrijk aspect van innovatie en ondernemerschap. Met als bijzonderheid dat dit onderzoek kijkt naar migranten, die tenminste in een eerste stadium, buitenstaanders zijn in de samenleving waarin zij wonen.

Dit onderzoek definieert economische innovatie als een incrementeel proces, dat kan worden waargenomen in producten, de uitvoering van diensten, de interne organisatie van een bedrijf of de marketing strategieën. Op individueel niveau van de ondernemers, zouden nieuwe business ideeën worden beïnvloed door drie hoofdaspecten: a) de onderwijsachtergrond of werkervaring in andere landen waar business ideeën uit voort komen die nieuw zijn voor de specifieke sector waarin een ondernemer opereert, b) de financiële middelen om nieuwe diensten uit te proberen en om te gaan met een nog onbekende reactie van de beoogde consumenten, en c) de diverse sociale groepen die bijdragen aan het creëren van een 'safe zone' voor ondernemers.

Om de lacunes in het onderzoek over innovatie van migrant-ondernemers op te vullen, kijkt dit onderzoek naar twee empirische casussen. Op basis van 70 interviews in Brescia, Italië en 41 interviews in Amsterdam, Nederland verkent dit onderzoek de innovatieve business ideeën die gebaseerd zijn op ervaringen met migratie van de migrant-ondernemers. In elk van deze casussen geeft de verzamelde informatie een dieper inzicht in de conceptuele verbanden in de theorie. In de ene casus wordt gekeken naar de relatie tussen *het product en de ondernemer*, in de andere naar *de context en de ondernemer*, en in beide casussen wordt gekeken naar *de connecties en de ondernemer*.

De methoden voor zowel het verzamelen van data als het managen van de data en de analyse van de data worden beschreven in hoofdstuk drie. Beide casussen verkennen verschillende maar elkaar complementerende facetten van de concepten, waardoor er gekozen is voor twee parallelle, maar kruis bestuivende, processen van data verzameling en analyse. Voor de dataverzameling is gebruik gemaakt van vragenlijsten in het Italiaans en in het Engels. De analyse van de interviews draaide om de aspecten gerelateerd aan hun persoonlijke situatie, de situatie van het bedrijf, de omschrijving van hun diensten, de ervaringen met migratie en het netwerk van zakelijke connecties rondom de ondernemer.

Gebruikmakend van de Amsterdamse empirische casus kijkt hoofdstuk vier naar de relatie tussen het product en de ondernemer. Incrementele innovatie is gedefinieerd gebaseerd op een kader van vijf kenmerken: relatief voordeel, compatibiliteit, complexiteit, testbaarheid, en observeerbaarheid. Migrant-ondernemingen passen nieuwe producten en diensten die de lokale populatie niet heeft aan door gebruik te maken van hun geaccumuleerde ervaringen in onderwijs, werk, migratie en cultuur. De resultaten laten twee typen van innovatie zien: het gebruik van digitale technologie in de vorm van markt innovatie, en culturele kenmerken in de vorm van producten en productie innovatie. Het Engelssprekende segment van de markt heeft baat bij digitale technologie die toegankelijk is voor en gebruikt wordt door de “expat gemeenschap”. De culturele kenmerken hebben familiariteit als kern van de dienst, met de tradities ingebed in taalbeheersing, gedragingen en sociale interacties.

Hoofdstuk vijf kijkt naar de relatie tussen context en ondernemers, aan de hand van de empirische casus van Brescia. Ondanks het bestaan van programma’s die ondersteuning bieden voor innovatie, is er een gebrek aan stimulansen gericht op buitenlanders die innovatieve bedrijvigheden willen introduceren in de regio. Diensten van migranten richten zich op de lokale markt door het gebruik van de Italiaanse taal en concurreren, meestal in prijs, met andere aanbieders van diensten. De spreiding van migranten gemeenschappen in de regio creëert een wisselende vraag naar de diensten van migrant-ondernemers onder mensen met dezelfde etnische herkomst, waardoor ze het moeilijk hebben en overleven op een kleinschalig niveau. Daarbij komt dat migrant-ondernemers hun tijd gebruiken voor andere activiteiten om hun individuele menselijk, sociaal, financieel, en cultureel kapitaal aan te passen aan de gastsamenleving. De relatie tussen migranten en de lokale bevolking wordt gezien de startende gebruik van face-to-face communicatie waar de lokale bevolking nieuwe informatie kan vergaren. Ook gebruiken migrant-ondernemers digitale communicatiemiddelen, zoals Facebook of WhatsApp groepen, om met ondernemers van dezelfde, of cultureel nabije, etnische achtergrond informatie over prijzen, leveranciers, en regels uit te wisselen.

Hoofdstuk zes bekijkt de relatie van connecties en ondernemers door beide casussen te gebruiken. De resultaten laten zien dat zowel vergelijkbare als verschillende netwerken nodig zijn, de eerste om business ideeën te ontwikkelen en te testen, en de andere om ze te implementeren en te vergroten. Er is een kennis stadium waar ideeën instaan, de respondenten in Amsterdam beschrijven het als gunstig voor het creëren van innovatieve ideeën. Migratie ervaringen dragen bij aan het ontwikkelen van innovatieve ideeën, samen met de invloed van netwerken met vergelijkbare mensen met een hoog opleidingsniveau, adequate werkervaring

en genoeg financieel middelen. Daarnaast hebben migranten een voordelige positie in de lokale markt opgebouwd met het creëren van lokale (Nederlandse) zakelijke contacten. Er is een keuze stadium, gezien vanuit de interviews in Brescia, waar ideeën beperkt geïmplementeerd worden. In plaats van het aantal connecties spelen hier voornamelijk de kenmerken van de connecties een belangrijke rol. De connecties met mensen met een vergelijkbare culturele achtergrond, jonger dan de ondernemer, met hetzelfde geslacht, suggereren een gebrek aan expertise en ondersteuning. Ondernemers worden ontmoedigd en beperkt om hun innovatie te implementeren en geven daarom de voorkeur aan het herhalen van de praktijken van de concurrentie.

Concluderend laat hoofdstuk zeven zien dat er zowel positieve als negatieve effecten zijn van de introductie van innovatie door de ondernemingen van migranten. Er zijn zeker beoogde positieve consequenties, zoals hoge opbrengsten voor de ondernemer, of een betere manier van ondernemen. Tegelijkertijd zijn er onbedoelde consequenties zoals het vervangen van minder efficiënte, maar traditionele, niches of veranderingen in culturele kenmerken. Voor toekomstig onderzoek, zouden de hierboven genoemde factoren in overweging moeten worden genomen wanneer er gekeken wordt naar het betrekken van nieuwe business ideeën in lokale economieën. De bevindingen gebruiken de vier bouwstenen om bij te dragen aan het begrip van de motivaties, aspiraties en potentiële van migrant-ondernemers die hun innovatieve business ideeën wel -of niet- kunnen aanpassen aan de contexten in de gastsamenleving.

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Juan Francisco Alvarado V. (1984), sociologist, is specialized in entrepreneurship, social projects, migration trends, personal connections and cross-cultural bridging. He has conducted research-related and policy-making activities for the past 12 years while working for NGO's, consultancy bureaus and governmental institutions.

In his academic career, his master's degree (Erasmus Mundus – Universities of Amsterdam, Deusto and Osnabrück) was achieved with the study of members of migrant associations in the receiving country through a case of Ecuadorians in the Basque Country. His doctoral research project (NASP-UvA) between 2014 and 2018 investigated the role of innovation and social networks of migrant entrepreneurs in Italy and the Netherlands. His current research at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (HvA) involves collection and analysis of the stories of entrepreneurial failure and recovery, and connects academic outputs with entrepreneurial education and policy advice.

Alongside research activities, he is involved in the dissemination of academic knowledge to a wider audience through the project "Bridge the Gap" together with the Municipality of Amsterdam. He has been also been involved in the preparation of workshops, advisory of projects and lecturing for the Metropolis Project, the IMISCOE Network, Escuela CEIC and Instituut Gak.